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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

JOHN LEWIS — THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND MARXISM

BARNEY DAVIS — BRITISH YOUTH—PROGRESSIVE, REACTIONARY OR INDIFFERENT?

HOWARD SELSAM — AN ANTIDOTE TO DOGMATISM—MAURICE CORNFORTH'S "MARXISM AND LINGUISTIC PHILOSOPHY"

DISCUSSION:

LEO McGREE, DAVE BOWMAN — CHANGES IN THE WAGES STRUCTURE

BETTY REID — THE FREEDOM OF ART

ALAN SPENCE — THE LAWS OF DIALECTICS

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Marxism Today

Vol. 10 No. 3

CONTENTS

		page
	Editorial Comments	65
John LEWIS	**The Dialogue Between Christianity and Marxism**	70
Barney DAVIS	**British Youth—Progressive, Reactionary or Indifferent?**	76
Howard SELSAM	**An Antidote to Dogmatism—Maurice Cornforth's "Marxism and Linguistic Philosophy"**	83
DISCUSSION:		
Leo MCGREE, Dave BOWMAN	**Changes in the Wages Structure**	89
Betty REID	**The Freedom of Art**	92
Alan SPENCE	**The Laws of Dialectics**	94

AMONG ARTICLES IN APRIL AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Hilda VERNON	**American Aggression in Vietnam**
Brian SIMON	**Britain's Crisis, Economic, Political and Moral**
Fergus NICHOLSON	**A Consumer View of Higher Education**
Desmond GREAVES	**Ireland—Fifty Years After Easter Week**
Kay BEAUCHAMP	**Racialism**
John BERGER	**Mannerism**
Laurence BRADSHAW	**Contemporary Soviet Art**
Jessie KOCMANOVA	**The Socialist Poems of William Morris**
Chris ALEN	**Freedom Now!**

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Editorial Comments

THE decision of the U.S. further to intensify the war against the Vietnamese people is accompanied by the usual U.S. hypocrisy about the need to defend democracy. This is an old U.S. custom.

Thus three weeks before he gave his sanction for the abortive invasion of Cuba, Kennedy concluded a speech on the so-called "Alliance for Progress" with the words:

> "Let us once again awaken our American revolution until it guides the struggle of peoples everywhere—not with an imperative of force and fear—but the rule of courage and freedom and hope for the freedom of man."

Yet a few weeks later he gave sanction for the sending of an American trained and munitioned force to invade Cuba. The leadership was composed of the worst reactionary émigré elements, all wavering democratic sections having been eliminated. This invading force had a project called "Operation Forty" which included the killing of all political leaders who stood in the way, including people who were opposed to the Castro government. It was the worst elements of Cuban reaction that the Americans sought to impose on the Cuban people. Yet then, as now, the counter-revolution advanced under the slogans of democracy.

During his period of office Kennedy recognised at least five reactionary coups in Latin America. Johnson continues this policy as his intervention in the Dominican Republic shows. There is not a reactionary regime in the world, striving to hold down its own people, that the United States is not supporting. There is not a democratic regime, striving to bring about progressive social change, that it is helping in the slightest degree. Yet the cant about promoting democracy goes on.

A Basic Question

The Labour and Tory leaders are adepts at discussing Vietnam without asking one of the basic questions, namely what is a huge American army, now exceeding the 200,000 mark, doing in that country? A lot of controversy goes on in bourgeois circles on whether the Liberation movement of South Vietnam should be present at the conference table. But what justification the Americans have for being there is never explained.

The South Vietnam puppet governments have since 1954 been in receipt of all kinds of American economic aid and of massive military assistance. If the South Vietnamese puppet governments had any popular support, had behaved with any sense of decency, they could, with the massive aid proferred, have set up some kind of viable regime. They initiated nothing but repression until finally the liberation forces revived and began to defeat the puppet government, driving it near to the point of complete collapse. Yet the national liberation forces in South Vietnam never had a tithe of the resources that the Americans had lavished on the puppets. Where popular support lay was only too evident.

At the eleventh hour, faced with the collapse of their puppets, the Americans, who had already had thousands of advisers there (including military cadres) decided to escalate the war by sending in a massive army to tip the scale in South Vietnam, and to start bombing North Vietnam.

Up till now Wilson and Stewart have never really attempted to justify the U.S. army being there. The U.S. had no historic links with the country, nor had it economic interests, nor was its interference sought by any popular interests.

Yet it is basic to the Wilson-Stewart thesis that by dint of its brutal invasion of Vietnam the U.S. had acquired certain "rights" of negotiation and the Vietnamese refusal to negotiate while there is a huge invading army on their territory is treated as as act of aggression.

Reasons for Escalation

Worse still the fact that the resistance of the Vietnamese to this huge and superbly armed army is taken as a justification for escalating the war. Said Wilson:

> "The House can understand the feelings of many Americans that they are fighting with their hands tied behind their backs. During the week which ended on January 15th when the bombing pause was still on American casualties numbered 292, more than the total number of casualties sustained by all the Commonwealth forces in Malaysia, during three years of consultation." (*Hansard*, February 8th.)

Can sharp practices in argument be carried further? A huge American army invades South Vietnam. The Vietnamese instead of coming in with their hands up, proceed to fight back and the Americans sustain casualties. The British Prime Minister then complains that the Americans are being forced to "fight with their hands behind their backs".

The invading American army is supported by the world's largest air force, and battle fleet. The South

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Vietnamese ground forces have no air cover whatsoever. This the Prime Minister describes as the Americans "fighting with one hand behind their backs".

One-Sided Truce

In the debate a very pertinent question was asked by Mr. Hugh Jenkins who challenged the statement that the cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam was a "one-sided truce". Surely this was a false picture "as there had been no bombing of South Vietnam by the North", he asked.

Wilson's reply was that he equated bombing of the North by the Americans as the equivalent of the infiltration of North Vietnamese into South Vietnam. What sophistry. Even if this infiltration was taking place, it was more than balanced by the massive landings of American troops in the South. Surely it is Wilson with his support of American bombing who wants a "one-sided truce".

More One-Sidedness

The American-owned car firms in Britain are part of the British capitalist economy's export drive, as well as Fords and General Motors profits drive. The question therefore arises can there be conflict between these two factors?

This question, though not quite so sharply phrased, is posed in an article on "American car firms in Britain" in the February *Times Review of Industry*, by Mr. Roy Hattersley, M.P.

The American motor industry (including its plants on the continent and in Britain) is out to capture the lion's share of the European market.

Suppose, asks Mr. Hattersley, the American market prediction with regard to Europe turns out to be exaggerated. Which plants will they cut? The firms in America, the U.S. firms in Europe, or the U.S. firms in Britain? Mr. Hattersley admits that "certainly a fall in European demand might result in new British developments [in the American-owned firms in Britain] being held back (major investment decisions are the only admittedly American policy) but there are British firms capable of filling whatever vacuum exists. In any case it is hard to complain about foreign investments in British industry and then denounce the investors for investing too little".

This is a nice piece of logic chopping. People are complaining that foreign investment in Britain may result in control of policy being in the hands of foreigners. Mr. Hattersley admits this as far as some control of some investment is concerned. This is a danger and it is no defence to say that a British firm might step into the gap created by a foreign-owned firm. The fact remains that the foreign-owned firm could be dragging its feet because it is restrained by its foreign owners and because it is relatively less interested in the British economy than is the British firm.

Another point mentioned by Mr. Hattersley is that:

> "Fords buys 46 per cent of its machine tools from America and 14 per cent from Europe. The parent company [U.S. Fords] holds no equity in American machine tool firms and Fords simply buy American products because of the British industry's inability to meet their needs . . . Fords may overstate and overplay their criticism of British manufacturers, but there is obviously at Dagenham genuine conviction and genuine regret that the American purchases are essential."

What about British-owned motor firms? If they are buying 46 per cent of their machine tools from the U.S. then Fords have a case. But we doubt if this is so. In any case has British Fords had a discussion with British machine tool firms?

In any case more than half of this great export industry is owned by Americans who have also large plants in other countries and whose export policy will be decided accordingly. This is clearly a danger. It is not a case of denouncing all foreign firms in Britain but when they reach this proportion of one industry surely there is a danger.

Profit, Politics and Apartheid

Why is it that the British and American Governments have continually used their powers in the United Nations to prevent effective measures against the South Africa of Apartheid? One of the reasons is that there are few greater sources of profit for British and American capitalism.

The profitability (for capitalism) of *apartheid* is analysed in the greatest detail by P. Tlalé in a recent issue of *The African Communist*[1]).

One of the special characteristics of South African capitalism, he writes, is the "close co-operation, if not unity, between foreign capitals and the domestic rulers in the development of South African economy, based, as it always has been, on cheap African labour and *apartheid*".

Tlalé explains the difficulties of obtaining accurate figures of foreign investments in South Africa from official statistics. With that reserve, he estimates that between 1936-1960 the value of ascertainable foreign capital investment in South Africa rose some 300 per cent to reach a total of £1,530 million, which, incidentally, represents about half the total foreign investment in the whole African continent.

Foreign investments in South Africa are centred round mining, manufacturing and finance. They are known for their high profitability. Tlalé considers

[1] P. Tlalé—*The Imperialist Stake in Apartheid, The African Communist*, No. 23, Fourth Quarter, 1965.

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that, at a very conservative estimate, foreign capital earns an annual average of 10 per cent on its investment in South Africa.

Of this British investors draw no mean share. According to the 1963 Survey of the South African Reserve Bank, Britain is still easily the largest foreign investor, holding in 1963 some 53 per cent of the total foreign investment. (It had held 64 per cent in 1960, but since that the U.S.A., West Germany and others have increased their share.) Well over 70 per cent of domestic bank deposits in South Africa are held in British-owned banks. British insurance and building societies continue to handle over one-half of South African business in these fields. The Bank of England is the main buyer and distributor of South African gold.

"War", Lenin once wrote, "is very terrible, but it is terribly profitable." The same could be said of *apartheid*. And the British shareholders who draw these profits, and the successive British Governments who protect their interests, share the responsibility for *apartheid* with the defenders of white supremacy inside South Africa.

Catholics and Communists

Over a considerable period some very intimate and interesting talks and dialogues have been taking place between Marxists and Catholics. Their value cannot be doubted, and their full significance may only emerge over a longer period.

In this connection we have been interested to receive a copy of a journal—*Slant*—edited by progressive Catholics.

The first article in the Winter 1965 issue [2] under the title *Christians and Marxists* discusses articles which appeared last year in the *World Marxist Review*. It concludes:

> "In England we cannot hope to achieve anything of the level of the Paulus Society meetings, which for the last seven years have brought together leading Marxists and Christians engaged in university work (the last meeting in Salzburg was, perhaps significantly, extensively reported in the *World Marxist Review* (August) and briefly and vaguely in *Concilium* (September). But a start has to be made. One of our undertakings in future issues will be with making such a start."

In the same issue there are articles on "Apartheid" (by Bishop Ambrose Reeves), on "Unilateralism as a Moral and Political Commitment" (by Professor Gordon Zahn), reviews of Socialist books, and a thought-provoking article by Charles Boxer O.P. on "The Priest in a Godless Society".

The article on Apartheid quotes the definition published by the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference:

> "The basic principle of apartheid is the preservation of what is called white civilisation. This is identified with white supremacy, which means the enjoyment of full political, social, economic and cultural rights. Persons of other races must be satisfied with what the white man judges can be conceded to them without endangering his privileged position. White supremacy is an absolute. It overrides justice. It transcends the teaching of Christ."

Charles Boxer O.P., whose "Priest in a Godless Society" is based on a talk given to the Clerical Students Conference at Spode House, last September, self-critically examines some Catholic approaches:

> "One of our chief illusions is the paternalistic image of ourselves as ministering to society: of a situation in which we go into a pagan world and convert it to Christianity, to Catholicism—the missionfield image. But like all our illusions this image starts to look a bit awkward when we start to compare it with what is actually happening."

And he draws the lesson that Catholics must study, come to terms with, the world as it really is.

Slant seems anxious to discuss all the burning issues of modern society without bans and limitations, and to further the dialogue between Christians and Marxists.

We hope that the article by John Lewis "The Dialogue Between Christianity and Marxism" in this issue will contribute to this dialogue and lay the basis for a fruitful discussion.

British Agriculture and World Food

For a country with a balance of payments problem, and importing half of its food, expansion of agriculture would seem to be an obvious must. There has been limited recognition of this in the National Economic Plan, which calls for the maximum increase in beef which is physically possible, and utilisation of the increase in milk which must go with it. The greater part of the additional feedingstuffs required is also to be produced at home. Our agriculture is as efficient as almost any other in the world; and, by several standards of measurement, compares favourably with our own manufacturing industries. All this is brought out in a new book *Farming and Food Supplies* [3] by Margaret Bramley. Most of the facts are not new, but Mrs. Bramley is the first to have brought them together against the

[2] *Slant*, Vol. 1, No. 6. It will be bi-monthly as from January 1966.

[3] Margaret Bramley—*Farming and Food Supplies*, Allen & Unwin, 20s.

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background of rapidly growing monopoly capitalism in Britain; and its inevitable exploitation of an industry made up of small producers.

But the problem remains, that, however obvious the case for expansion, inhibitions are still extremely strong, the fear of producing too much, collapsing prices, and crisis for the agricultural producers, is never very far away.

Mrs. Bramley's original contribution is a brief but frank and inclusive examination of this dilemma. She relates it to the world food shortage, and the crying need to marry "surpluses" of food in advanced countries with malnutrition, starvation, disease and death in the others. Of course there are difficulties and obstacles, but the human race in the 20th Century can overcome them. One of the Labour Party's election pledges was to initiate international discussions. It is one of the most pressing problems facing progressive people in all countries and it is intimately connected with the fight for peace.

Class in Canada

It is not altogether unusual that writers who set out to refute Marxism provide in their writing material in its support. A case in point is a recent study by John Porter of class and elite in Canada [4]—*The Vertical Mosaic*. The author rejects the Marxist concept of class and polemises against it in his book, but his valuable, carefully gathered, data on Canadian society seem to argue for Marxism and against his own approaches.

Economic power in Canada, he shows, is largely concentrated in the hands of 183 dominant corporations, which together accounted (in 1955) for 40-50 per cent of railway transportation, 88 per cent of telegraph and cable services, 82 per cent of air carriers, 83 per cent of telephone revenues, 60-70 per cent of privately produced electricity, as well as a large proportion of industrial minerals, fuel, water transportation, and retail distribution.

He points to "a further degree of concentration of power and decision-making between these corporations" due to "the interlocking directorships between 170 of these dominant corporations and as well between the corporations and the principal financial institutions".

He looks at the rulers of Canada and finds that they tend to be Anglican, Anglo-Saxon, products of well-to-do homes, private schools and Universities and not to be French-Canadian, farmers or working class. In one table (XXI) he shows that families with incomes over $10,000 (three per cent of all families) account for 15 per cent of all University students; in another (XXIII) that children of parents in highly paid professions are 30 times more likely to get to the University than children of unskilled workers.

Examining the mass media in Canada, he shows that "only the very wealthy or those successful in the corporate world, can buy and sell large newspapers which become, in effect, the instruments of an established upper class:

> "In 1960, the Southam chain, the Sifton-Bell and Sifton papers, the Thomson chain, the *Toronto Star*, the *Globe* and the *Mail*, the *Telegram*, the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Montreal Star*, and the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* accounted for all the newspapers circulating in census metropolitan areas (excluding Newfoundland) and they accounted for almost 80 per cent of all English language daily newspaper circulation."

Porter recognises a similar concentration of control in periodicals, radio and television, and even in Universities and selection of the clergy. The Universities as established in Canada today have to justify the existing order. The *avant-garde*, he writes:

> "may even at times be given the particular task in the Universities of 'stimulating the young', but they are never found in sufficient numbers to offset their traditional and conventional colleagues . . ."

William Gallacher's Memoirs

Shortly before he died William Gallacher completed his *Last Memoirs*. These are being published this month by Lawrence and Wishart, at 45s. The book contains a number of delightful photographs.

These memoirs cover the whole of Bill Gallacher's life, from childhook up to the time when he ceased to represent West Fife in Parliament. The great days of the Clyde, the interviews with Lenin at the time of the foundation of the Communist Party, the work of a Communist M.P.—it is all there.

Among his many outstanding characteristics, Bill Gallacher included an indomitable fighting spirit and an irrepressible sense of humour. Both are much in evidence in this book. The reader will take heart and courage from Gallacher's absolutely steadfast unfearing championship of the working class and socialism, and be reduced to fits of laughter at Gallacher's descriptions of many scenes and persons. Instruction, entertainment, inspiration—Gallacher bequeaths all that to the movement in this book.

Just as he stood out head and shoulders above most others as a working-class leader, so do Gallacher's *Last Memoirs* stand out as a magnificent record of working-class activity and working-class understanding of life.

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[4] John Porter—*The Vertical Mosaic: an Analysis of Social Class and Power*, University of Toronto Press. See also the interesting review of this study by Emil Bjarnason in the Canadian *Marxist Quarterly* (Winter 1965) on which we have drawn in the comment above.

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Brasshats and Bureaucrats

The first part of D. N. Pritt's *Autobiography* ("From Right to Left", published last autumn by Lawrence and Wishart) received very wide notice in the press. The publishers have announced the second part, which is called "Brasshats and Bureaucrats", for the end of March. And the third and final part, "The Defence Accuses", will appear in November.

In "Brasshats and Bureaucrats" Pritt relates his activities from 1944-5 to the 1950 general election —when he lost his seat as a Labour independent in North Hammersmith. The book owes its title to the fact that, all through that period of the closing phase of the war and the post-war Labour Government, Pritt was the scourge and terror of both brasshats and bureaucrats. Amongst other cases of which he has to tell are the famous episodes of the "Cairo Parliament", and the cases of several groups of soldiers charged with "mutiny". He has also much to say about the anti-Soviet and pro-fascist activity of the top brass and of Whitehall (including Labour Ministers ensconced there).

When Pritt quit parliament in 1950, he devoted most of his time to the defence of leaders of colonial liberation movements, including Jomo Kenyatta. The final volume, in which he shows how the defence of the movement became the effective accusation of colonialism, will be eagerly awaited. This is one of the great autobiographies of our time.

Translations from the Hungarian

It is terribly tantalising to receive, as we do, a whole number of Hungarian journals, to read the contents list and short summaries of articles which are often included in the English language, and then to be prevented by the language barrier from further reading. This is especially so as we know that there is a tremendous range of Marxist writing in Hungary today, much fascinating discussion, and a marked absence of dogmatism.

Comfort can be found in the fact that in recent years there has been a steady increase in availability of translations of Hungarian scientific and cultural works into English, and also into French, German or Russian.

In the field of philosophy the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has published a whole series of studies—*Studia Philosophica*—in foreign languages. These include studies on Aristotelian logic (in Russian), on Denis Diderot (in French), on the Beginnings of Knowledge (German), on Scientific Definition (German), on Descartes (French). The most recent work in this series is a study (in French) on the Ideological Antecedents of Historical Materialism.[5]

In the field of history the Academy of Sciences publishes a multilingual journal—*Acta Historica*. The contents are a mixture of French, German, English and Russian. The articles in English of the most recent issue (Nos. 1-4, 1965) treat subjects as varied as "The First International and War (1864-1866)", "The Mission of General Smuts to Budapest in 1929" and "The German Occupation of Hungary".

Besides the Academy of Sciences, the Corvina Press at Budapest specialises in the production of books in foreign languages, including English. I should like to recommend two recently published works in particular. One, under the title of *Landmarks*[6], is an anthology of Hungarian writing that reflects the last twenty years of Hungarian policy. It will give you a breath at least of the variety of styles and approaches of Hungarian modern literature, and a vivid reflection of both positive and negative sides of the twenty years since liberation from fascism.

The other—*Science in Hungary*—is a sort of short encyclopædia of the development and present position of the arts and sciences in Hungary ranging from biology and chemistry, through philosophy and linguistics to agronomics and art.

There is much more, though space forbids us from expanding on the subject. The *New Hungarian Quarterly* very effectively keeps English readers in touch with Hungarian cultural developments, and if any of our readers would like more details we should be glad to try and assist. [7] The language barrier can nowadays be pierced.

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[5] Erik Molnar—*Les Antécédents Idéologiques du Matérialisme Historique*.

[6] *Landmarks*—Corvina Press, Budapest.

[7] All the above books and other Hungarian works are available through Central Books and Collet's.

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The Dialogue Between Christianity and Marxism

John Lewis

The Salzburg Conference

AT Salzburg in May 1965 ten Marxists from Italy, France, Yugoslavia, Belgium and Austria entered into dialogue or debate with a considerable number of Christian theologians, philosophers and churchmen. In three days of talks and discussions, lasting from morning until late at night, the relations of Marxism and Christianity were frankly and temperately explored. Professor Hollitscher reporting on the conference says that the representatives of religion were clearly unprepared for the freedom, the tact and the tolerance displayed by their Marxist opponents.

In this country it is by no means uncommon for Marxists to be invited to discuss their beliefs with Christian ministers of many denominations—Catholic, Methodist and Anglican—at public meeting or religious assembly. There is a reason for this. A sharp turn has taken place in the attitude of Christians to Communism. The growing prosperity and internal stability of the socialist countries, the existence of powerful Communist Parties in Italy and France, the realisation that the great evils of poverty and social degradation appear to concern Socialists more than Christians today, have led to a retreat from the former position, in which religious leaders, Liberals, Social Democrats, and the political forces of the West, side by side with the Vatican, united to oppose the common menace—Pope Pius XII even going so far as to forbid Catholics to join the Communist Party and to declare anyone professing or defending its tenets liable to excommunication. His crusade was in vain. More than a quarter of the Italian electorate still vote for the Communist Party, including many thousands of Catholics.

The whole situation has now changed both on the Continent and here. Religious leaders are most anxious for the Church to take up a non-aligned position in world affairs, and above all to be allowed to discover a sense of social progress and become an instrument of change, playing its full part in the battle for human freedom and social justice.

The old religious picture of this world as a "vale of tears" which has underpinned Conservative political forces for so long, is to disappear, to be replaced with the call for positive social action.

One distinguished theologian has declared that "Marxism is not a vulgar form of materialism, and is not a denial but an expression of humanism. This world outlook," he declares, "cannot be countered by polemics. It must be deeply studied so that a dialogue with Marxism may take place".[1]

The New Rapprochement

Religious leaders in this country have moved even closer, for we have here a Christian Socialist tradition going back to Frederick Denison Maurice, Charles Kingsley, Scott Holland, Conrad Noel and Bishop Gore; and the radical movements have never been anti-clerical as they have been in France and Italy, where the Church has entered the political field openly to oppose Liberalism and has launched its own political organisations and parties. Nor has it been confronted as the Russian socialists were with a corrupt Church committed to the maintenance of autocracy and actively controlled by a secular Procurator.

Today in France, Italy and Britain the opportunity has come for a continuance and development of Thorez' historic policy of "the outstretched hand". The Italian C.P. leader, Luigi Longo, declares:

> "We Communists have always rejected anti-clericalism. . . . Our aim being to unite all working people in the common struggle for the democratic renovation of Italian Society. . . . We believe that honest religious consciousness can make a contribution."

In France the worker-priest movement is to be re-established, though it is to be more strictly controlled than before. This movement provides most remarkable evidence for the new rapprochement. In 1944 some hundred priests were working full time in industry in an attempt to revolutionise the Church's relationship to the industrial workers and to heal the breach between them. Strongly supported by the Dominican Order they soon found themselves sharing in the trade union struggle and in the fight for peace. They fully participated in the

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[1] *World Marxist Review*—Statement by Father Guerva Banyres.

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World Peace Movement demonstrations of 1948, and two of them were arrested in 1952 in the demonstrations against the new N.A.T.O. Commander-in-Chief, General Ridgway. The priests themselves in many cases not only became closely identified with the workers' movement, but began to question the rules of the priestly life. The Vatican intervened to the deep sorrow of thousands of forward-looking Catholics and the experiment was brought to an end. So it was intended; but following the Vatican Council the effort is to be revived on a new basis, the Conciliar document on the Church in the Modern World arguing forcefully that the Church should become an instrument of change.

"Sweeping social changes," it says, "will have to be effected. . . . Every form of discrimination, whether political, social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, social status, tribe, caste, colour or religion, is therefore to be condemned and progressively eliminated".

Ideological Differences Remain

The Salzburg Dialogue was a clear expression of the new spirit, but at the same time revealed the direction in which the convergence of Church and Party cannot and should not be pursued. There was, on the one hand, a tendency to bring out and emphasise the philosophical differences, which of course are fundamental. In so far as this was done, the two sides drew apart. Father Gustav Wetter of Rome, for instance, who has written a scholarly and fair-minded book on Dialectical Materialism, voted against the resolution passed at the conclusion of the conference, which declared that the dialogue had been fruitful and should be extended. But, on the other hand, in so far as their differences were fully recognised, and the issue of participation in a common struggle for human betterment was emphasised, the two sides drew together. Professor Reding, who had been associated with the worker-priest movement and had asserted that the class struggle was fully justified and so far from being artificially provoked arose from contradictions which existed long before the days of Marx, urged that a dialogue between Christianity and Marxism was essential. His position made it abundantly clear that he desired to see the Church released from its association with capitalism.

One of the French Communists, Roger Garaudy, said that Communism was destined to accomplish in a secular way what Marx himself had called "the human foundations of Christianity". He struck a new note when he said that religion was not merely the "opium of the people", nor did it everywhere and at all times direct men from action or from struggle. Christian ideas could help to stimulate believers to action. He again stressed the great change now coming over the Church in the increasing importance attaching to man's earthly existence. It is this that opens new prospects for joint struggle and joint effort.

Other speakers made it clear that the concept of coexistence as applied to relations between states cannot be extended to relations between opposing ideologies. It is not compromise in the sphere of philosophies that is sought but unity in the practical effort to solve the social problems on which the future of man depends. Here is the common ground on which Christians and Communists can meet for joint action. We can unite in the struggle for peace, an end to hunger, social justice and well-being worthy of man. "We ourselves", said Dr. Mario Gozzini of Florence, "are interested in building socialism on the solid foundations of freedom and democracy." That should satisfy any demands made by Christianity, and provides much common ground. Even so "We do not ask the Church to build socialism. We ask it to grant Catholicism the freedom to work for socialism."

The Church Still Stands

The new phase in the relationship between Marxism and the Church has therefore two sides: While the Church is abandoning her crusade against Communism, Marxism has recognised the folly of the anti-God campaign.

The Church knows that excommunication and Papal encyclicals have proved utterly useless. Communism is a fact. It is viable, stable, succeeding. It has come to stay. To take up an intransigent attitude means the erosion of Christianity, the discounting of authority, the decline of its influence. The threat to launch the thunder-bolts of Jove recoils in ridicule if the heavens remain serene.

Communism has also come to realise that to demolish the philosophical bases of Christian theology makes little difference to Christianity, which, like all religion, is not an edifice built on a rational theoretical foundation but an institution brought into being by social and psychological needs. At the Salzburg Conference Professor Bosniak of Jugoslavia asked "Why people in so many different periods in history have experienced the need to believe in God". Marx never for a moment countenanced an all-out attack on religion. When he went to Cologne to edit the *Rheinische Zeitung* he vigorously repudiated the policy of his Berlin friends, the young Hegelians, who had launched a vigorous campaign for atheism. "I asked them," Marx wrote, "to criticise religion by criticising political conditions rather than the other way about, because religion, quite empty in itself, lives from earth and not from heaven and will

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disappear on its own once the inverted reality whose theory is repression is dissolved".[2] If they want to criticise religion let them do it through the criticism of political conditions rather than criticise political conditions through the criticism of religion; and let them cease playing about with the label "atheism"—behaving "like children who tell everyone they are not afraid of the bogeyman".[3]

The French Marxist, Gilbert Mury, follows Marx when he says that "Taking a materialist view of history, the Marxists recognise that Christianity will not vanish into thin air. Conditions must be created for the evolution of a human being who will live in a just world and, as a result of the realisation of man's aspirations, will free himself from religion."[4]

Nor does this mean that the day after the red flag is sent up over the Parliament buildings the Church falls in ruins. A classless society is not built in a day. As long as sacrifices are demanded to carry through modernisation, as long as threats of intervention drain away resources and make an abnormal degree of discipline and precautions against subversion necessary, so long will Marx's conditions for the disappearance of religion remain unfulfilled.

The Poles know only too well that the Church has not been conjured out of existence by Dialectical Materialism. It remains—popular, strongly supported by the Polish people, well organised, exercising authority. And it cannot be suppressed.

Religion is part of the superstructure, which does not mean (as opponents of Marxism think it means) that it is a mere vapour and ineffectual froth thrown up by the economic bases. The superstructure is the material, institutional, political, legal, military and ideological support of the social system. It is powerful, dangerous, effective. It defends and it attacks. The Church is a great institution, with a complex hierarchical organisation, great financial resources, magnificent buildings, a great art, a rich cultural heritage, numerous and disciplined bodies of men—the Orders, the priesthood. It is an institution with its own philosophy, its own ethics; often its own political parties. There is nothing derogatory in the Marxist premise that religion is both an ideology and a vital part of the superstructure of capitalism. Every social concept, Marxism included, reflects, and powerfully affects, actual social conditions.

But this implies a change in the Church itself when society enters a period of radical transition. At first the Church is mobilised as a counter-revolutionary force. The signs that this position is being abandoned, or, at the least, that it gives rise to grave doubts, reflects the growing strength and the consolidation of the socialist world. There are signs that the more alert and far seeing Church leaders are realising that persistence in such a policy may prove fatal, that the Church remains a negative and passive force at its peril. In the fight for peace and progress they may be called upon to play an active role, if only to ensure their own survival.

Reaction, too, Remains

Two qualifications: Do not let us suppose that the arrest of the abortive anti-communist crusade and the cautious if significant moves towards some kind of understanding with both the Polish and Hungarian Governments mean that reactionary powers and policies have been overcome. Paul VI is not Pope John. Cardinal Ottaviani, the arch-reactionary of the curia, who calls himself "the old policeman", could reassert his influence at any time, as Father Arriape, the head of the Jesuits, has already done, in spite of the energetic protests of the progressive Dutch Jesuits—who refuse to be put down. And if leading Churchmen see the danger signals and respond do not let us imagine that the parish priests are very different from what they always were—with notable exceptions—or that the churchgoing faithful are particularly enlightened. But, as Galileo said when Cardinal Bellarmine told him to say that the earth was immovable, "*Eppur si muove*" (Nevertheless it *does* move) and rank and file Christians cannot but be aware of it, and must, in the long run, come to terms with changing conditions.

Christian Socialism in Britain

Religion in England pursues its own compromising, British way, showing far less consistency than we find on the Continent, and some surprising, if erratic, enthusiasms for socialism. In the first place we are not anti-clerical, as the French and Italians are still, because earnest Christians turn up in all political parties and churchmen have not had to emphasise their separateness. Instead of banding together in one party, members of the various churches are found in all: and this has proved an effective way of protecting religious interests.

Even more significant is the important tradition of the Christian social conscience. Kingsley proclaimed himself a Chartist. Archbishop Temple was for seven years a paid up member of the Labour Party. Tawney, author of *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, a very Marxist-slanted work, was a staunch Anglican. We still remember Conrad Noel in full canonicals with processional cross in the May Day Parade, and Father Groser was beloved by the whole East End of London. Maurice, Toynbee, Scott Holland and Gore were the men who were saying "Christianity is the religion of which Socialism is

[2] Marx to Ruge: November 1849.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *World Marxist Review*—August 1965.

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the practice". The High Anglicans in particular were strongly conscious of the Christian challenge to the acquisitive society. There was always a vocal and courageous protest from deeply respected religious leaders—Anglican and Free Church—against the neglect or failure of the political parties to cope with the social evils of the century: poverty, hunger, disease and unemployment. This undoubtedly softened the resistance to Socialist ideas, and lessened the hostility of Socialism to the Church. The Marxist could not say that its adherents were always supporters of reaction when he saw Temple and other bishops taking up the miners' cause during the General Strike of 1926. It is not entirely true to describe the Church of England as the Tory Party at prayer.

The New Theology

This recognition of the Christian challenge to capitalist society reflects a powerful tradition in this country, that has manifested itself in successive decades in one form or another and has never been without influence. It is powerful today in many directions: both theological and social. Here the British movement, unlike the Continental Catholic change of direction, is theologically as well as socially progressive.

We begin with the rediscovery of the humanism of Jesus the carpenter and the steady erosion of the mythical and supernatural from his life [5]—the birth story, the miracle, the resurrection. This has been proceeding for over fifty years *within* the Church. Among its protagonists have been the Bishop of Birmingham and members of the Modern Churchman's Conference as well as many New Testament scholars. Here the protest has been against the tendency of the Church to allow the other worldly aspects of its teaching about Jesus to submerge the secular content of his message about human life. This return to the historic figure brings into prominence the attack on riches, the contempt for ritualistic and merely external religious practices, in rediscovery of a revolutionary if Utopian element in the Gospels.

> "He hath put down the mighty from their seat
> And exalted the humble and meek.
> He hath filled the hungry with good things
> And the rich he hath sent empty away."

This recognition of fierce antagonism not to "the World" as the flesh and blood life of man, but as the corrupt society of first century Palestine with its cruel exploitation of the poor, has been recently much reinforced by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, bearing witness to a Puritan revolt against the Hasmonean dynasty and their Roman successors, a strong, ethical, resistance movement, religious but against the Priesthood, out of which Christianity emerged.

The theologians' revolution has also taken the form of an attack on Supernaturalism and on organised Christianity as representing an otherworldly and mystical faith. One vigorous exponent of secularised Christianity—and incidentally a loyal member of the Church—writes "the best thing about being a Christian at the moment is that organised Christianity has collapsed." [6] Werner Pele says "When we use the word 'God' we are talking about something which no longer connects with anything in most people's life".

Nicholas Mosley in his *Experience and Religion* puts on one side the cynics and the bigots who see only man's helplessness, who think social effort fatuous, ludicrous and unspiritual, and on the other the truly religious people who are those who have help to offer, who face the urgent issues of our time, looking to the evidence, not to rules and projections of our own mental condition. Those who really belong to the new age of enquiry, ready to test all things.

The Bishop of Woolwich

And so we come to the Bishop of Woolwich and his near neighbour the Bishop of Southwark—to what is called South Bank Christianity. If it is pointed out that John Robinson's theology, which equates God with "the ground of our being", and tries to explain orthodox phrases, concepts and rituals as in some way a Christian manifestation of this "ground", has most dubious philosophical justification and seems sadly confused, one cannot but agree, and at the same time say emphatically that this is simply not the point. Religion is never at any time or in any place the expression of a purely philosophical belief. It is the recognition of the *sacred*, either in the "numinous" or the mystical or the sacramental on the one hand, or in the demands which the needs of our fellow men present to our impulse to pity and fellowship on the other. The new theology holds, with the distinguished Cambridge professor of Dogmatic Theology, John Oman, that "the test of a true faith is the extent to which religion is secular".

If that seems the very extinction of what we call religion, the Bishop and the professor would reply: That depends on the force of the moral obligation to stand by your brother, on how far the obligation is sacred in the sense of being absolute. And they would both support their contention by exhaustive references to the teaching of Jesus.

[5] Strongly supported by the influential and otherwise orthodox German theologian, Bultmann.

[6] Monica Furlong in *The Guardian*.

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The philosophical justification, or even the theology, does not matter at all. The enormous volume of Christian response to *Honest to God* does. Thousands of Christians rejoice that *from the Church* it is said that there is such a thing as "religionless Christianity"; that God is not a man-like person, "out there", that man no longer needs to look either to philosophy or to religion for direction; he is where he is, achieving what destiny he chooses; religion belongs to the past, not to the world of assumed fact; theology is a mere squabble about fancies, useless in the world of empirical action. It is therefore our responsibility to recognise that the divine must be found in ordinary everyday experience and its opportunities and responsibilities; that we have not to accept Christ and worship Him because we are told that he is divine, but to worship what is divine in him, and in all men.

The New United Front Today

Whether the Bishop of Woolwich has clearly seen where this leads him or not, there is little doubt where this new conception of the sacred is taking a large section of the Church. There is an almost volcanic ferment within it today. We see it in the considerable support in Church Synods and Assemblies for Nuclear Disarmament, in the widespread and energetic repudiation of racialism—at home, in America, and in Africa. This finds organised expression in the work of Canon John Collins and *Christian Action*; but it finds support everywhere. The Bishop of Matabeleland, when Mr. Ian Smith declared that UDI was a blow for the preservation of Christianity, said in Westminster Abbey:

> "This is not the religion of Christ. It is because of this kind of blasphemy that people are rejecting it in Africa today."

The Archbishop of Canterbury has not only declared that the ultimate use of force might be necessary in Rhodesia and would be justified in that case, but has manifested a forthright determination to say exactly what he thinks on such issues regardless of the fury this arouses in churchmen like Quintin Hogg.

One of the most moving and significant declarations of sympathy and indeed spiritual identity with the new nations now standing on their own feet and making their own destinies, comes from Father Trevor Huddleston, Bishop of Masari in Tanzania, whose courageous resistance to Apartheid along with Archbishop Joost de Blank won our admiration some few years ago. He feels in the resurgent nationalism of these liberated peoples, and exactly the same would be true of the New Democracies in Europe,

> "a sense of social power and purpose. It is the sense of having a freely chosen direction in planning for the future. It is the realisation that, at last, administrator and people are part of one urgent drive to the building of a nation. And this, with whatever mistakes and frustrations and difficulties there may be, means life." [7]

He adds that there is an immense satisfaction in being no longer one of the ruling race doing good to a subject people, but sharing as an equal and a participant in an emerging *African* social order, an immense exhilaration just because a whole country is in movement to the rich possibilities of an African Socialist State.

Having said so much, and this does mean influential if not numerous allies for every forward advance, it is also necessary to recognise the still powerful forces of reaction in the Church and above all the vast apathy and immovable prejudices of the vast majority of churchgoers. It is mainly the parsons and not the pew that we look to for support. In fact their congregations often break the hearts of ministers preaching in vain a gospel of social responsibility.

Challenge of an Acquisitive Society

But the religious movement in Britain, unlike that on the Continent, is not by any means a matter of expediency, a move dictated by the fear of losing influence. It arises from a perfectly genuine recognition of the challenge of a capitalist society—acquisitive, involved necessarily in colonial exploitation and war, profiteering from armaments, regardless of human welfare when it stands in the way of profits—to the enlightened Christian conscience. This is an ethical revolt against the very bases of the capitalist system, admirably expressed in the last pages of Tawney's book on *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism:*

> "The quality in modern societies, which is most strongly opposed to the teaching of the Founder of the Christian Faith . . . consists in the assumption that the attainment of material riches is the supreme object of human endeavour and the final criterion of human success. Such a philosophy, plausible, militant, and not indisposed, when hard pressed, to silence criticism by persecution, may triumph or may decline. What is certain is that it is the negation of any system of thought or morals which can be described as Christian. Compromise is as impossible between the Church of Christ and the idolatry of wealth, which is the practical religion of capitalist societies, as it was between the Church and the State idolatry of the Roman Empire."

What Then Are We To Do?

1. We must repudiate the idea that those outside the Communist movement, whether workers or middle class non-socialists, whether religious or

[7] *Observer*—December 19th 1965.

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mainly interested in science and culture, constitute 'one reactionary mass'. The Church, as a community, is not part of the reaction.

2. It is not our task in relation to the Church to launch an attack on its ideology in the name of atheism. Within the Church "there persist the conditions and the pressure to move to the Left which we must understand and assist. For this purpose, the old atheist propaganda is of no use."[8]

Again turning to Marx "We do not turn secular questions into theological questions: we turn theological questions into secular ones." Religion flourishes as a manifestation of *social* defects within a democratic state.

"We explain the religious backwardness of free citizens in terms of their social narrowness in order to abolish their social fetters."[9]

3. It is not our business to construe our relation to the Church in terms of a philosophical attack on its theology; though this is part of our theoretical treatment of contemporary thought. We are concerned with the broad basis of common action on which we may expect and demand co-operation from Christians, and we should in seeking for this avoid being led into controversy on theoretical differences between Christianity and Marxism. Some religious persons will wish to divert our attention in this direction: we should not be misguided by them.

4. On the other hand, where a strong tendency to the secularisation of religion appears, we should welcome it in spite of its inconsistencies and shortcomings, since it offers an opportunity provided by religious persons to show that they have come closer to our position.

5. There does arise, therefore, usually but not always in other connections than joint action on progressive struggles, and quite frequently in open dialogues on the relations of Marxism to Christianity, the task of removing misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Marxism, especially regarding the importance of the individual. This will, increasingly, give us an opportunity not to be missed.

6. In this matter, while the main theoretical discussion will be confined to a minority, we must remember that there is a steady process of infiltration from intellectuals to wider circles through press and radio. The continuous and patient work of refuting religious misrepresentations of Marxism will prove invaluable and is absolutely necessary.

7. Reverting to the ground for common action. We raise no difficulty as to working alongside those who disagree with us on ideological grounds. Should Christians be reluctant to work with us, we may wonder whether they really desire to overcome the evils we both oppose since without every possible aid they cannot possibly hope to succeed. To refuse a fire hose to put out one's burning house, because of a theological difference, would suggest less than a strong desire to save the house. If there *is* a strong desire, our help will not be refused.

8. What we are likely to achieve by the extension of such discussions between Marxists and Christians is not only a widening of the sphere of common action and the breaking down of entirely baseless prejudices and illusions—these being important immediate objectives; but there are other more indirect results with still more important long-term consequences.

Firstly, the claim for the ethical superiority of the Christian position rests wholly on distortions of the Marxist's view of the individual, the State, freedom and materialism. To show that the practice of an accepted moral code can only lead to hypocrisy or futility unless a radical reconstruction of the system of social relations makes it feasible, exposes the futility of merely preaching love and brotherhood. We may thus rob our opponent of the shining armour of superior moral rectitude and leave him, insofar as he continues to oppose us, to fight on without his armour and perhaps with more respect for the programme which stands for the *conditions* which alone make it possible to practise the Christian ethic effectively.

Secondly, we are not only concerned with those who take common action with us, or who then and there change their attitude to Marxism. The world is changing, contradictions are accentuated, the balance of forces shifts; a totally new situation, if prepared for by the discussions we are considering, finds many people, including leading figures, once quite alienated and hostile, now ready to see the full force of our case, to move over into co-operation, and in not a few cases to join our ranks. It is never only the rational case for Communism that convinces, but the march of events, the ripening of the situation, the emergence of new crises on the one hand and new opportunity on the other, that wins growing support. But this requires the preparatory work of removing ignorance and prejudice, presenting reasonable criticism of idealistic policies, clarifying the objective grounds for Communist solutions. This was well seen in the sudden, and to many people, unexpected unity of Communists and Socialists in support of Mitterand and against de Gaulle. There are even more striking and important shifts of non-Communist opinion which will manifest themselves as the world situation enters the new phases which undoubtedly lie ahead.

The dialogue between Christians and Marxists is an essential preparation for such days of crisis and opportunity.

[8] Togliatti—*Memorandum*—Yalta, August 1964.
[9] Marx. *The Jewish Question.*

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British Youth—Progressive, Reactionary or Indifferent?

Barney Davis

"I CAN'T understand the youth of today." I do not suppose that is a new phrase. It's probably been used in reference to past generations. The phrase in itself is a truism because it would be impossible to understand any generation *as a whole*. It is, of course, also impossible to write about a generation as a whole. However, today's generation of young people have received an extraordinary amount of attention from radio, TV, press and the Establishment at large, and we, too, should be paying more attention to the trends, thoughts and actions of youth today.

There are approximately nine million people (one-sixth of the total population), between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age in Britain. These people have been brought up in a declining capitalist Britain; when at the same time in the world the forces of peace, progress, socialism and national liberation have been gaining ground. It is against this background that we should view youth today.

Youth and Critics

Youth are usually a natural force for progress. They come into a society that has been built by previous generations. They are usually the first to want to change and improve society, but the ideas of how to change and into what do not come automatically. Many young people in Britain today wear their hair long, go on all kinds of protest marches, wear clothes their elders would not be seen dead in, take drugs, like protest songs, are non-religious, do not like politicians or political parties, like satire against the establishment, could not care less about the Queen and the Empire, and there are many who are cynical about Britain.

All these thoughts and actions are expressions against conforming with our present way of life, and show the restlessness among young people. Why are today's generation as restless as they are? Many views have been put forward, such as war babies, after-the-war-babies, too much money, the bomb, not enough capital punishment, affluent society, lack of religion, lack of parental control, the welfare state, etc. "The affluent society and the welfare state were blamed by Lord Shawcross last night for causing young people to go wrong." (Press Report.) "Our country is being destroyed before our eyes by a conspiracy of intellectuals without faith, delinquents without honour—young men incapable of dreaming dreams." (Quintin Hogg in *National Excellence*.) "What troubled him was why youngsters turned hooligan, why did boys and girls form themselves into rogue groups." (Henry Brooke, Tory Home Secretary.)

Perhaps the Teddy Boys and later the Mods and Rockers are the groups of young people who have received the most publicity from the press and TV Special TV and cinema films have been made about them. Books have been written: *Generation X*, *The Unattached*, and others. The Ministry of Education produced "The Youth Service in England and Wales" (the Albemarle Report). But while it was the Mods and Rockers incidents that attracted recent attention, the number involved was fairly small. On the other hand, events involving hundreds of thousands of young people such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Movement for Colonial Freedom, Young Communist League, Young Socialists, and Peace in Vietnam marches have not prompted films, books, or Government reports (there are secret ones of course).

Youth in Progressive Movements

While a few hundred Mods and Rockers at Easter receive newspaper headlines for their deeds, tens of thousands of young people marching against the war in Vietnam on the same weekend received very little publicity. If it were possible to be an impartial observer, one would have seen that *by far the most important recent development amongst youth has been their involvement in progressive movements.* It is estimated that 80 per cent of the Easter peace marchers have been young people. On the Peace in Vietnam march of November 27th, 1965, the *Evening Standard* reported "Thousands of young people" marched. There were also reports of youth and student demonstrations just after Smith declared U.D.I. in Rhodesia. Subtract youth from progressive public demonstrations and the result would be a very sorry one. It seems to many young people that the Labour and progressive movement conduct their politics in Committee Rooms and that's where they remain. Whilst many youth are weak on the Committee Room side, they are prepared to show the public their feelings. In

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December 1965 the BBC programme "Listening Post", in answer to a question, gave the following figures of membership for political youth organisations: Young Conservatives 100,000; Young Socialists 15,000; Young Liberals 15,000; Young Communists over 5,000. (I would say the Y.S. figure is inflated.) If the Youth Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament had been a *well-organised* membership organisation, judged by the amount of support the peace movement has among young people, I am sure that it would be bigger than all these organisations put together. As I have already said, the bulk of Easter marches have been youth. Some of these marches have reached the figure of up to a quarter of a million (on Easter Monday 1962). What other organisation could turn out as many youth as this? It can be assumed for every *one* on the march there must be many other supporters throughout Britain. It is significant that the issue that has mobilised and caught the imagination of young people is peace.

Centuries of army and war glorification do not rub with these young people. Despite extensive press and TV advertising, the Armed Forces continue to have difficulty in recruiting young people, and this means that despite a cold war propaganda campaign unrivalled in history, a campaign which was anti-peace, anti-Communist, pro-NATO, pro-U.S. bases, pro-A and H weapons, and pro-German rearmament, a campaign that was pursued into every niche of British life, day in and day out, and been pushed through the biggest propaganda machine reinforced by mass media known to man. If this campaign had worked, today's generation should have been a rabid bunch of anti-Communists, militarists, dying to be chosen for the honour of serving Queen and country. But the "1984", *Brave New World* type machine has failed.

It is all to the credit of these young people who have refused to be taken in, much to the rage of the establishment. Of course, although the question of peace has been the mobiliser of young people, they have not stopped there. Many have joined other progressive organisations, or given them support, particularly the fight against racialism. Alongside this development has been the decline of Establishment youth organisations, such as the Boy Scouts (who feel long trousers are the answer to their problems). Many religious organisations are also having difficulty in attracting youth. The Labour Party was forced to resurrect its youth organisation under the name "Young Socialists" (since changed to Labour Party Young Socialists).

Political Parties

The Young Conservatives declined 150,000 in membership. The Liberal Party had a revival, the Communist Party membership increased several thousands. Many of these things have happened because of the involvement of youth in progressive causes. What political party have these young people joined? One would assume Labour or Communist. A few maybe. But not the great majority. Here are hundreds of thousands of youth involved in movements of progress, yet they have not joined the parties of progress. We need to ask ourselves why. An attitude to parties in general has developed which unfortunately sometimes includes the Communist Party. Much of this is due to the fact that they do not know what the policies of the Communist Party are. To many young people there is no dynamism in political parties. Labour, Liberal and Tories seem very much the same. There is no great discussion or difference of opinion between these parties. Whilst the issue of the bomb raged everywhere from schools to pubs, was alive and active, most of the time all three large parties were in favour of the bomb in one form or another.

It is true that the Communist Party was fighting for peace when peace was a dirty word, but this was not generally known. The image of the Communist Party is to a degree one which has been created by capitalism. Communists need to do more to dispel this propaganda. Sometimes this propaganda is aided by people who are trying "the plague on both of your houses" attitude, the general line of the C.N.D. carried still further by the Committee of 100 and the Anarchists, and manifesting itself in slogans such as "Communist Hands off Vietnam", or at the time of the Cuba crisis the attempted march from the U.S. embassy to the Russian embassy (which a handful joined). Many young people, whilst being anti-capitalist, fall for capitalist propaganda and, unknowing victims of capitalism, become anti-Communist, too. One of the reasons youth joined the anti-bomb movement was that it was worth belonging to. It had done something. It had earned its spurs with youth.

Songs of Protest

One of the side products of this movement of youth has been protest songs that have entered the hit parade, songs that would make Joe McCarthy turn in his grave. While we should not under-or over-estimate these songs they are a further extension of youth's thoughts and actions. Of course the commercial boys have affected the songs and the singers. But before this occurred young people were listening to and singing songs without commercial influence. It was only when the industry noticed that there was a steady demand for long playing records by Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, etc., that they realised there was a market among young people for protest songs. They began to intensify and promote the sales of protest songs. The singers of these songs are not immune to the pressures of

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capitalism, but it is up to Marxists and progressives to help guide the work of these singers, not to sit on the bi-line and jeer. Otherwise they are just left to the mercies of capitalism (I wonder how many promising artists this has happened to?). Protest first hit the hit parade with songs like "We shall Overcome", "Blowing in the Wind", "Where have all the Flowers gone", and "Times they are a-changing". On one of Bob Dylan's best selling L.P.s "Free Wheelin'" is "The Masters of War". Here are some of the words:

> "Down with the masters of war,
> who build the big guns,
> who build the death planes,
> who build all the bombs,
> —You've never done nothing but build to destroy,
> you play with my world like its your little toy
> —like Judas of old you lie and deceive,
> a world war can be won
> you want me to believe
> —you hide in your mansions built on young people's blood,
> then you honour their bodies as you bury them in the mud."

There have been songs in the hit parade about the war in Vietnam. I cannot remember this sort of thing happening at the time of Suez or even further back at the time of Korea. Protest songs, good and bad, have been written and sung. Singers have recognised the progressive trends of youth and themselves are a product of the same generation. Joan Baez and Donovan have sung at Peace in Vietnam meetings; the Manfred Mann group have been to Czechoslovakia where they recorded an anti-Vietnam war record. The lead singer of the group, Paul Jones, has said in the *Melody Maker*:

> "I still think it is a good idea the railways were nationalised. I believe in Clause 4 of the Public Ownership Act. Nationalise everything is my firm belief. I am afraid it will lead to more bureaucracy initially but it is the only way to get the money out of the rich few and distribute wealth among the entire population. For that reason I will be against Conservatives until my dying day, not that I feel Labour is my Party."

The Manfred Mann group were also banned from singing an anti-Vietnam war song on the BBC. Dusty Springfield refused to sing before segregated audiences in South Africa and was deported. The Beatles refused to sing in the southern states of the U.S.A. before segregated audiences. Beatle Paul McCartney wished the 1965 Easter march all success. Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, or Bob Dylan, can fill the biggest hall in Britain within a few days of its announcement. Folk clubs, large and small are booming all over Britain. The "Folk Guide" advert column in the *Melody Maker* is as big as the dance club column. Folk programmes are a regular feature on Radio and TV. The fact that folk and protest songs are popular with young people is not unrelated to what is going on in the world, or the fact that youth have been involved in progressive movements. A few years ago this type of song could only be heard around a Y.C.L. camp fire or social. Today millions of these records have been purchased; they have and are being played in millions of front rooms. And if they do nothing else they are making many young people think of issues they never thought of before. Have they been purchased to dance to or because they are catchy? Many of them certainly cannot be danced to and are not catchy. They have been purchased for the words and to listen to.

Youth and the Vote

It is no wonder that the Liberal revival should have occurred recently. Many people, young and old, are fed-up with Labour and Tory policies, and many young people, without thinking too deeply about this, feel the Liberals are the alternative. The important thing is that they are looking for an alternative and genuinely feel that the Liberals will make a major change in British life. This is shown by the fact that many young Liberal policies and decisions are more progressive than those of the Labour Party Executive. The Liberals try to pose as the Party for youth, and a few years ago they adopted as part of their policy votes at 18. Of course, this was not unrelated to youth's interest in politics. In the early '60s a Labour Party Youth Commission also found in favour of votes at 18. Now the Labour Party Executive are in favour also. They all followed the Y.C.L. and Communist Party who have had this as part of their policies for years. It is interesting that only the Tories are against votes at 18. Providing that the battle for the vote at 18 is won, how will these people vote? The *Sunday Observer* noted the following: out of all those canvassed between the ages of 18 and 21 years, one-third said they had no allegiance to any party. Of the other two-thirds 56 per cent would vote Labour, 29 per cent Conservative, and 15 per cent Liberal (*Observer*, 21.2.65.) They were not given the opportunity to express their views towards the Communist Party. It is estimated that there are $2\frac{1}{2}$ million people in this age group, of which if we follow the *Observer*'s figures over 800,000 have not made up their minds. If the vote is won for this age group it will open up a whole new field of work and opportunity insofar as elections go.

The Young Socialists

If this situation that I have described among young people is correct, it is a fair question to ask why are the Young Socialists so small? The answer

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lies with the right-wing of the Labour Party and its fear of youth.

The history of Labour Party youth movements has followed a regular pattern of youth movements formulating left-wing policies and then being smashed by the Labour Party leadership. The latest stage in this history is the Young Socialists which was formed in 1960. Between 1955 and 1960 there was no Labour Party youth organisation. In 1959 the now defunct *Daily Herald* held a youth commission which published a report "Our World is Tomorrow", within which there was great criticism of the Labour Party by progressive youth. At the same time the Labour Party held a youth commission which recommended the formation of a youth organisation. In 1959 the Labour Party claimed 288 youth sections of the Labour Party. In October 1960 it claimed 608 branches of the newly formed Young Socialists. A guide for Y.S. members was produced. In its introduction it stated "it wants the voice of youth to be heard and heeded wherever policies for the future are being discussed and decided." It then *appointed* the editor of the Y.S. paper *New Advance*.

There can be no doubt that the growth of the Y.S. was linked with the anti-bomb movement. They were in support of the Scarborough Labour Party Conference when it voted for unilateral nuclear disarmament. The Y.S. very soon came under fire. The appointed editor of *New Advance* was sacked because he complained he was not the editor. The N.E.C. of the Labour Party was. They produced a paper *for* Y.S. members, not *by* them. It became obvious to the Left of all shades that the Y.S. were a happy hunting ground. Different groups began to publish their own newspapers, large and small, each competing for support. Rival papers accused each other of being agents of Transport House. Whilst left-wing policies were being passed at Congresses the infighting between rival factions became intense, sometimes exploding into violence. The Labour Party soon had out the hammer with expulsions of Y.S. national committee members, closure of branches, closure of federations. In 1965 the Trotskyist paper *Keep Left* called a conference in the name of the Young Socialists, elected its own national committee and adopted *Keep Left* as its official paper. The Labour Party then re-named its organisation the Labour Party Young Socialists. So now there are two Young Socialist organisations.

The Labour Party decided that the official Y.S. conference delegates would be appointed by local Labour Parties, that branches prior to the Conference would discuss two documents: (1) Rebuilding Britain, and (2) industrial training for youth. Discussion at the Conference would be limited to these two documents. Resolutions to the Conference must only concern youth. The Y.S. national committee would be appointed by federations of the Labour Party, and Conference chairman by Transport House. Adult M.P.s would move the documents in the conference and reply to the discussion. But even with all these efforts the Labour Party still could not get a right-wing youth conference. "Mr. Frank Chappel, a member of the Labour Party national executive, told Young Socialists . . . that their 'annual conference was an insult to British youth' . . . the outcome of the two-day conference was that the left-wing . . . defeated the Government's economic progress report and condemned its immigration and foreign policies. It also repudiated the new constitution imposed on the Young Socialists." (*Daily Telegraph.*)

Estimates of the Y.S. membership range from 5,000 to 15,000. Here are thousands of young people fighting right-wing social democracy and many thousands more have been disillusioned and driven away by the right-wing. The story of the Y.S. is one of young people wanting and demanding an end to capitalism and the beginning of a socialist society, only to be crushed between the oppressive right-wing and the futile ultra-left Trotskyists. The size of the Y.S. is a tragedy for the Left. But also shows that the right-wing fear a strong socialist youth movement. It is not surprising that the right-wing should join in with the capitalist press in condemning today's young people.

The Young Communist League

It is not surprising that the Young Communist League has grown in size and influence over the past period. In 1960 the membership was 1,796. At the end of 1965 it was 5,420—over 1,400 new members in 1965 alone. In Scotland the membership in 1961 was 420. At the end of 1965 it was 1,520. In 1965 the Y.C.L. grew 25 per cent, winning new members at a much faster rate than the Communist Party. This fact alone will make progressives at all levels think deeply about their attitude to youth because this increase in membership is only scratching the surface. This increase was obtained by 200 branches of the Y.C.L. The more branches we have the bigger the increase could have been.

The anti-Communism that savaged past generations does not exist to the same degree with today's youth. More and more schools, colleges and youth clubs are asking for speakers on Communism. It is comparatively easy to be a Communist among young people. The Y.C.L. can openly run meetings, dances, socials, folk clubs in the name of the Y.C.L. and in many cases get a majority of non-Y.C.L. people along. The Y.C.L. ran a coach collecting money for medical aid for Vietnam, all through the summer, autumn and winter of last

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year, with posters on the side proclaiming the fact, and it received tremendous support throughout Britain. As well as paying for the cost of the campaign nearly £500 has been given in pennies, sixpences and large silver, by the public to the Y.C.L. At a recent London Y.C.L. torchlight procession for peace in Vietnam, as it passed through Piccadilly Circus, 30 young mods dashed across the road, not to do battle, as some thought, but to join in the march. *Challenge* ran a concert at Camden Town Hall for medical aid for Vietnam. Over 600 people attended and £161 was donated by an audience that contained a great number of non-Communists.

Why Youth Join the Y.C.L.

The Y.C.L. is more and more becoming recognised as a leading force in youth politics. In a BBC series of programmes "Let me Speak", compèred by Malcolm Muggeridge, the Y.C.L. was asked to take part and were given a whole programme. The Y.C.L. National Secretary was asked to speak at a Y.C.N.D. rally in Trafalgar Square alongside a number of Labour M.P.s. The Y.C.N.D. National Chairman also spoke at a Y.C.L. rally in Trafalgar Square. The National Liberation Front has been in communication with the Y.C.L. and thanked it for its efforts for peace in Vietnam. As for left unity, the Y.C.N.D. has approached the Y.C.L. along with other organisations to sponsor the petition "Let Britain Lead". The four points contained in the petition are roughly: (1) Rejection of British nuclear weapons and to resist the spread of nuclear weapons. (2) Britain to leave NATO, SEATO, and CENTO. (3) Independent initiative for peace in the United Nations. (4) Disassociation from U.S. policy in Vietnam and for Britain to bring about peace in Vietnam. The National Association of Labour Student Organisations, the Union of Liberal Students, and the Communist Party National Student Committee have all signed a five-point agreement to end the war in Vietnam. The level of unity among youth is growing continually. The fact that it can happen with youth organisations is testimony that anti-Communism does not exist as much as it did amongst youth, and perhaps still does amongst older people.

The Y.C.L. are only just beginning to get this recognition because it has earned its spurs. We have demonstrated our strength over a number of campaigns we have conducted. What kind of young people have joined the Y.C.L. and why? The average age of the Y.C.L. is between 18 and 19, which means that a person of average Y.C.L. age was born between 1947 and 1948, but half our members are under 18 and 19. A member of 16 was born in 1950. A little mathematical exercise will show that these young people's thoughts about the world, taking that they started when they left primary school, occurred in the early '60s, when the cold war was not at half the intensity it was in the early '50s. At the same time the material wealth and example of the socialist countries is growing all the time, making thousands of young people think. The reason why people join the Communist movement today is not in the main because they are starving or because they are unemployed or because there is going to be an imminent slump. But these are the reasons why thousands joined the Communist movement in the '20s and '30s. The workers in their struggle with capitalism have filled their bellies, have secured in the main jobs; although slumps under capitalism can never be ruled out, the signs are not obvious to the average young person.

In 1938, if you were between 15 and 20 and had a job, the average pay was £1 6s. 0d. for boys and £1 4s. 0d. for girls, which meant just a few shillings were left for spending. This is not the position today. Of course, many young people have joined us for economic reasons. Many others have joined because of the ideas of socialism and Communism are dynamic and present a real alternative. Capitalism has cured many empty bellies and has cured many calls for work, but it cannot cure an idea. This does not mean that the Y.C.L. are a bunch of theoreticals rushing every month to buy *Marxism Today*, but the educational level of youth as a whole today compared with the '20s and '30s is far in advance, which means thousands of youngsters are thinking deeply and that many 14- and 15-year-olds are capable of deep thinking and serious conversation.

The old slogans or same line of argument 20 or 30 years old will not wash with today's youth. At many a school or college debate between Labour, Liberal, Tory and Communist the chairman has had to appeal to the audience to address questions to others and not just the Communist. All kinds of discussion and debates on the big questions are being conducted. Mention local drains and rates and many a youngster will creep out of the room. Among the topics being discussed are anarchism, communism, socialism, religion, disarmament, birth control, freedom from hunger, racialism, capitalism, and a host of others; of course the day-to-day issues are being discussed as well. It's no accident that the teach-in idea has proved tremendously popular with young people as a media where they can hear all points of view and put their own as well.

Problems

Many youngsters are showing their dissatisfaction with our present way of life in many different ways. Some not as positive as others. Life for many young people today is empty, meaningless, boring and oppressive. "Millions in search of tranquillity.

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During today a million tranquillisers and over 750,000 stimulants will have been swallowed. Then people will climb into their bed clutching glasses of water and well over 2 million sleeping pills . . . over 800 million sleeping tablets were taken under national health prescription . . . in 1962 general practitioners spent £4,600,000 on prescribing tranquillisers and anti-depressants." (*Observer*, May 1964). "People leave me awful cold. I hope I die before I get old, talking about my generation." (Hit record "My Generation" by The Who.) "The church has no meaning—a place full of old ladies in felt hats and smelling of cats and pekinese, boring sermons, meaningless prayers." (A nineteen-year-old quoted in *Generation X*.) "These long-haired mentally unstable petty little sawdust Caesars seem to find courage like rats by hunting only in packs." (Dr. Simpson, Margate court chairman, May 1964.) "Despite the warnings given in many reports (Crowther, Newson, Albermarle, Robbins, the King George V Jubilee Trust) there is not enough room in schools, colleges, universities and apprenticeship schemes." (*The Sexual Behaviour of Young People*.) "Those found guilty of indictable offences shows increase of 4.3 per cent for men aged 17 to 21, of 8.8 per cent for girls under 17, and 10.2 per cent for women aged 17 to 21." (Criminal Statistics England and Wales 1964.)

Only 33 per cent of young lads and 7 per cent young girls receive apprenticeships in the Britain of the 60's. The vast majority are offered and take unskilled jobs. On the one hand the technological revolution is blasted at them, on the other, they are given soulless, mind destroying jobs. If you were to believe that TV, pop magazines, films, and colour supplements, mirrored the life of teenagers, here are ever-smiling youth, gay, happy with lots of money and no worries in the world. We would, of course, be completely wrong. A truer reflection of life would be a colour supplement on "life working on a conveyor belt", or "true adventures of a shop assistant", or "how to enjoy standing on a street corner every night". The mythology about the life led by teenagers is in the main a false one. There is a growing problem of drug taking among youth. They are trying to escape from the real world they live in. It is incredible that only a few hundred youngsters head for the "best most entertaining and exciting place to be in in Britain at Bank Holiday"—"Brighton", for a scrap. For to them "it's really living". "I joined in a few fights, it was a laugh. I haven't enjoyed myself so much in a long time. It was great." (18-year-old quoted in *Generation X*.) Many find escapism with a motorbike, car or scooter. Others become beatniks. Many of today's dances were invented by young people in opposition to the waltz and foxtrot, etc.

Frustration

Life today is very frustrating for youth. They see Harold Wilson or George Brown on TV outlining the "New Britain". "Labour is ready, poised to swing its plans into instant operation, impatient to apply the new thinking that will end the chaos and sterility." (Labour Election manifesto 1964.) But know in the back of their minds that they will end up in "Coronation Street". The empty stomach does not exist among young people but the empty life without purpose is very much there. Huxley's science fiction novel *Brave New World* exists, not as he saw it under socialism but under monopoly capitalism. The grading of people took place under the 11+, and takes place in our class society. The drugs given to create artificial happiness are taken by many young people. Million of pounds are spent on anti-depressants. Automation and speed-up are dehumanising work. The beauty of our countryside and coast is being destroyed by land sharks and developers. The *News of the World* advertising and other publications ensure we get our healthy diet of sex. While the development of the mind is neglected. The future and security of young people is very uncertain.

There is not a great deal of faith in the establishment to solve Britain's problems or to ensure Britain's future. Today's youth have a unique opportunity of comparison. They can remember Britain under the Tories and can see in operation Britain under Labour. As everyone knows there is very little difference.

Our Responsibility

Communists have a great responsibility to point this out and show an alternative but if we are to grasp this it is going to take a tremendous amount of deep thinking amongst adult Communists. Do they understand what youth are doing and thinking? If they do not they are making a grave mistake. If they do, what are they doing about it? Marxists know that thought without action will never change anything. As Communists we campaign among all sections of the people, but we pay more attention to the sections that are most favourable to us. Young people are one of the most favourable sections of the population for us to campaign among and win.

While the Labour movement has neglected youth, the Tories have not. They built the largest political youth organisation in the so-called "free" world; at one time when Labour were last in power and at the height of the cold war, they boasted a quarter of a million members. Today it is 100,000. Recently the Tory Party appointed Ian MacLeod to look into the young Conservatives. He came up with the idea of raising the age limit to 35. Most of the

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membership is gained through its social facilities but is this not a lesson for the Labour movement? To many young people the trade unions mean very little. The trade union movement cannot rely on its laurels to win young people. Trade union branches were created as an instrument of working class struggle. What are they today? In many cases a club for a few older members to read out a mountain of uninteresting correspondence. It is an embarrassment to take a lively young person to join a trade union and then get them to sit through a meeting that to them is often the ultimate in boredom. The trade unions have million of pounds. Where are the bright interesting youth and sports clubs? Where are the trade union sports teams and clubs? Why are the trade unions not seen as an invigorating force for progress, either locally or nationally. To a great many young people the trade unions seem just as much a part of the establishment as the House of Lords.

There is a tremendous generation of young people, who have proved that they are prepared to struggle for what they believe in. They have been condemned out of hand by many people. *It is not the young people that are wrong but the society they live in.* The form of rejection of our society by young people is worrying some of the upper class. "The traditional trappings of authority—titles, property—instead of continuing to excite respect and awe tend rather to provoke ribaldry and ridicule." (Peregrine Worsthorne, *Sunday Telegraph.*) Lord Montgomery thinks the Government should bring back the call-up. One of the reasons that youth are receiving a great deal of attention under capitalism is because they are as a whole a large economic unit. They have more money to spend than their forefathers, therefore a teenage market has been established complete with teenage advertising. Although youth are ignored when it involves rights, equal pay or facilities, when it comes to spending money our society goes overboard for them.

Win Youth for Socialism

We should not join in with the condemnation of young people; at the same time we should not accept all they do as good. *What is needed is to guide this dissatisfaction and restlessness which at the moment is just "against" into being "for"—for socialism.* We need to show what socialism means, that it is a complete change from our present way of life, it is the modern answer to man's present problems, it is a society for the majority of people. We need to show the many-sided aspects of socialism and popularise them with young people. The possibilities exist, the instruments to realise these possibilities exist, the Communist movement. We need to be seen as a Party where youth are treated as equals and not told that they should concentrate purely on youth issues. This only means that youth are not capable of understanding world problems, when on the contrary it is they who are acting on world problems. Here we have a generation of youth brought up in age where socialism exists in one-third of the world, where the forces of national liberation continually march forward, where the struggle for peace is an every-day affair, in a Britain that can visibly be seen to be declining. Today's generation have experienced a lessening of the cold war, and are not so affected by anti-Communism. The Communist movement nationally and internationally has worked to create some of these conditions.

Now that the work is having the desired effect we need to use it to the full to put the alternative to capitalism. In working to change the world and succeeding in a number of fields and places, we are bound to change people and their ideas. This applies particularly to today's youth. Are today's youth different? I say yes, not because of themselves but because the world they live in has made them so. The battle of ideas needs to be extended to wider sections of youth. The potential idealism of youth is very strong. The harvest is there to be reaped. Unfortunately at the moment many of the harvesters are in the wrong field, using the wrong tools.

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An Antidote to Dogmatism

Maurice Cornforth's "Marxism and Linguistic Philosophy"

Howard Selsam

(*Howard Selsam, American Marxist philosopher, is the author of* "What is Philosophy?" "Socialism and Ethics", "Ethics and Progress", etc.)

MORE than a hundred years ago Marx wrote that he and Engels had written the *German Ideology* "to settle accounts with our previous philosophical conscience" . . . and "to clear our own minds". Rarely, if ever, has such a modest and disarming statement been made by an author of an historically important philosophical work. Not all Marxists since then have been willing and ready to "settle accounts" with their "previous philosophical conscience" and to make the effort required to clear their own minds.

Without denigrating the unique achievement of Marx and Engels in the *German Ideology*, or exaggerating the scope, purpose and method of Maurice Cornforth's *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*,[1] the reader cannot but sense the sturdy honesty and boldness with which Cornforth has sought to settle accounts with both his own previous philosophical work and the dominant trend in Anglo-American philosophy today.

In 1946 Cornforth's *Science versus Idealism* was the first serious attempt in the English speaking world to examine in detail the differences between Marxist philosophy and that of modern "empiricism" from Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, to Mach, Russell, and Wittgenstein. This is still a good book and it anticipated the collapse of the "verification principle" of Wittgenstein, Carnap, and other "logical positivists" nearly a decade before they themselves gave it up. But now Cornforth believes that he (and possibly Lenin by implication) "gave a greatly over-simplified account of its (the empiricist philosophy) social role", in ascribing its main function as that of reconciling science with religion and of equating it with subjective idealism.

Empiricist Philosophies

The reader of Cornforth's earlier book may think at first that he is simply repeating here his former analyses of the British empirical tradition, especially as found in Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. He himself says in the concluding paragraph of his Foreword that he goes over the same ground and sometimes repeats himself, but found much of what he had written earlier "very far from satisfactory" and is less repeating what he wrote nineteen years before than trying to correct it. This shows itself especially in his treatment of David Hume, whom he now calls "the greatest of the British empiricist philosophers", and confesses that he had failed earlier to do justice to his contribution. This is a challenging statement for any philosophical Marxist who has lived, argued, and debated such subjects as empiricism and pragmatism over the past thirty years. Most of us thought it essential, especially in relation to less orthodox Marxists, to denounce Hume as the arch-reactionary of modern philosophy. The present volume seeks to get rid of this dead-end of "he did . . . he didn't" by examining Hume with a wider angled lens.

I find a certain ambiguity, however, in Cornforth's formulation of the reason for this revised estimate. He says that "the chief fault in the earlier book was . . . that I had equated bourgeois empiricist philosophy with subjective idealism". Then he explains that such equation is not correct "because since the nineteen-forties the linguistic philosophy has succeeded in ridding itself of subjective idealism". This is, to say the least, an inadequate explanation. Has the elimination of subjectivism or solipsism in the last twenty years or so removed it from all previous empirical idealism as well as from itself? If so, this is an extraordinary achievement in retroactivity. Or does Cornforth mean that what has been called "subjective idealism" by both bourgeois philosophers and Marxists never was such? So much hinges on this distinction that one could wish that he made the basis for this shift in evaluation clearer. The question is not whether Marxists have evaluated Hume correctly or one-sidedly. It is rather if and how the rise of "linguistic philosophy" raised the controversy to a higher level. The latter alternative, it must be noted, is not inconceivable. The history of philosophy requires constant reinterpretation. What ideas "mean" changes with place, time and circumstance, and what they "meant" also changes with new social-historical perspectives.

[1] Maurice Cornforth — "*Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*" Lawrence and Wishart, 1965, 55/-

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This criticism, however, is not crucial. Fundamental is the fact that Cornforth has changed his interpretation of this whole historic philosophical tradition now that the "linguists" have succeeded in removing the skeleton of solipsism from the closet of British empiricism in general and of Humeanism in particular. Perhaps there never was such a skeleton but only its logical possibility, and that not Hume but some of his critics put the skeleton there and left the door ajar.

In any case, instead of apologising for revising so greatly his earlier interpretations, Cornforth is satisfied at "having been able to do so in the light of the evidence". And he concludes with the anti-dogmatic note that Marxists are making good progress so long as they can do that.

Re-examination

This is a challenging ending to a *Foreword* of just over four pages. But in this short space Cornforth refers to another area in which he has reviewed and changed his previous position. Concerned as he is with the constantly moving and changing currents in the fashionable philosophy of British and American universities, he is impelled to re-examine some of the fundamental formulations of dialectical materialism, which have remained stable, if not static, for the best part of a century. Here he necessarily treads on some delicate, or better, calloused Marxist philosophical toes. In this same *Foreword* he writes that although he regards as quite baseless the claims of linguistic philosophy that all philosophical generalisations result from the misuse of language be believes that "it has also made important discoveries in the special fields of logic and the logical investigation of uses of language, and that, besides, much of its own criticism of earlier philosophies is of great interest and value".

He believes, in short, that there are positive as well as negative estimates to be made of this philosophy and that it poses challenges Marxists cannot ignore. In reference to Marxism he admits that some of the propositions he has advanced, particularly on the meaning of "categories", and the "laws of dialectics" may not be found "readily acceptable" by many of his fellow Marxists because "some of them go contrary to very generally and traditionally accepted interpretations of Marxism". But he could do no less. Such non- or anti-Marxist philosophies as positivism, pragmatism, or linguistics are either totally false and require an absolutely negative approach, or they contain elements and techniques which may help us to clarify and refine our own positions. I would suggest that in the present volume, as contrasted with his earlier work referred to, Cornforth is following the lead of Lenin in his *Philosophical Notebooks* rather than his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.

As has been said, Cornforth anticipated by about a decade the demise of logical positivism or empiricism through its own inherent inconsistencies. Logical positivism is now dead and buried, even by its own leading exponents. But it has an important and powerful successor in linguistic philosophy or analysis. This originated at Cambridge and in less than fifteen years has become the leading philosophy not only there and at Oxford but at most American universities as well. It has reached the point in the United States where so many philosophy departments are dominated by it that graduate students in any other tradition feel that unless they become "linguists" in philosophy they had better turn to another field altogether.

An Anti-Philosophy

This philosophy, Cornforth amply and painstakingly shows, is less a philosophy than an *anti*-philosophy. Designed to overcome the difficulties of the earlier logical positivism's inability to handle its own prime concept of "verifiability" or "the verification principle"—the concept that any possible statement or proposition has neither meaning nor truth apart from its verification in individual or "immediate" sense experience—the linguistic philosophers have found all the problems of philosophy rooted in the misuse of words. As Francis Bacon had shown, men not only use words to think and communicate, but words often turn back upon men and *use* them. According to this "philosophy" all philosophical problems, such as matter and mind, body and soul, "ideas" and "the external world" are all derived from confusions in the uses of language. So, equally, are all problems of right and wrong, good and evil, fact and value. Men take words out of their ordinary everyday context, where their meaning is perfectly clear and unambiguous, and apply them to problems they were never designed to handle. This is the origin, the linguistic philosophers claim, of all so-called philosophical problems and of all schools of philosophy. [Shades of Epimenides the Cretan who said that all Cretans were liars! Is this not another "school of philosophy?"]

As Cornforth says, it is not a theory but an alleged cure for theories—the theory of having no theory. Language, it seems, has used man so badly when he sought to go beyond its use for daily life, that for more than two thousand years men have been chained by it to arguments over the creation of the world or its eternality, man's freedom versus determinism, whether mind is a product of matter or vice versa, the existence of God, of immortality, etc. As Cornforth sums it up: "Quite literally—the linguistic philosophy puts forward no theory, no theory whatever—and it can never be understood, still less sensibly discussed or criticised, unless this point is

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taken. It proposes no theory, either about language or anything else; but it demolishes bad theory, and cures you of *wanting* a philosophical theory." (p. 139.)

From this quotation alone the reader can readily see what a task Cornforth set himself. It is much easier to attack another theory than no theory at all, just as the White King in *Through the Looking Glass* found it easier to see real people than "Nobody" on the road.

Historical Roots of Linguistic Philosophy

The first of the three parts of this nearly 400-page book examines the historic roots of both positivism and linguistic philosophy, and intersperses these with brief statements of the lines of thought that led to Marxism and were developed by it. This historic analysis will not always be easy reading for the non-professional but it is most rewarding. It carries philosophy in its empirical tradition from Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke through Berkeley and Hume, to G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Moritz Schlick, Otto von Neurath, and Rudolf Carnap. He even throws in Boole and Frege's reformulation of traditional formal logic which culminated in the Russell and Whitehead *Principia Mathematica*, and quite pertinently, Kurt Gödel's famous "proof" of 1931 that no set of axioms can ever be capable of deciding or proving all theorems about numbers. Cornforth generalises this to mean that "There is no system of necessary truth such that we have only to discover the foundation principles and all of it without end comes within our grasp" (p. 85). This put an end to the Russell-Whitehead attempt to demonstrate "the principles of logic and mathematics as a self-contained system of necessary truth deducible from axioms of formal logic".

Part I ends with the key chapter entitled "A Spot of Nonsense" which presents the swan song of the logical positivist movement from the failure of the "verification principle" to the return of solipsism and the final effort, carried on in the United States by Carnap and von Neurath to escape from the quicksand by the "unity of science" through the study of the logical syntax of language. Cornforth summarises these efforts cogently: "Logical positivism", he writes, "was supposed to lead the way out of 'the inextricable tangle of problems which is known as philosophy'. Yet never since the latter middle ages had any school of philosophy contrived a tangle of problems so remote from any kind of practical relevance and so incapable of resolution" (p. 130).

Knowledge and Practice

Throughout this part, as in the whole book, Cornforth never loses sight of society and history, of human practice as the origin and test of all knowledge, as opposed to abstract schema or individual "sense-data", and the like. In doing this he takes the ground out from under the feet of virtually all the professional anti-Marxist philosophers by rooting Marxism in mankind's historical social-productive life and placing it squarely in the tradition of scientific-empirical methodology. Marxist philosophy, he asserts, "was based on accepting the fundamental principle that we can know only so much as we can discover by empirical procedures. All *a priori* principles, all alleged certainties founded on anything other than observation and the verification of theories by practice, were ruled out."

Perhaps this passage is a bit too glib and a trifle hasty. Is the process of the development of knowledge quite as simply *empirical* as Cornforth would have us believe, and were Marx and Engels so firmly committed to it? This is not to question their devotion to everything that is meant by scientific method, but they were a product of continental rationalism rather than British empiricism and did not find the need to reject "*a priori* generalisations" or high level abstractions as tools in the process of acquiring knowledge. The reader has only to look at Marx's Preface to the first edition of *Capital* and at Engels' "Natural Science and the Spirit World" (published in *Dialectics of Nature*) to see the qualifications I find desirable. Perhaps the difference is in part that of starting from scratch in facing every problem or of starting with generalisations and hypotheses based upon all previous knowledge available.

In any case, Cornforth, having thus defended Marxism's "empiricism" against the charges of Hegelian *a priorism* and the like, proceeds into the enemy's camp. "But this was from meaning," he writes, "that our knowledge is limited to our own sense-impressions. On the contrary, human knowledge is capable of penetrating further and further into the constitution, causes and laws of material processes which take place independently of our perceiving or knowing them" (p. 59). (One might comment here that such concepts as 'penetrating further', 'constitution', causes and laws', and 'material processes' are unacceptable to serious and consistent empiricists.) But all this takes us only to the threshold of the real content of the book.

The New Linguistic Philosophy

Part II is devoted to a presentation, analysis and criticism of the new linguistic philosophy. Cornforth goes over it carefully and sometimes wittily through the writings of Wittgenstein, A. J. Ayer, Gilbert Ryle, J. L. Austin, A. G. N. Flew, R. M. Hare, and many others. Virtually all of these writings examined date from after World War II. This part opens with the striking sentences: "Wittgenstein was not only an ingenious philosopher but also an honest man. As time passed, he became more and

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more dissatisfied with his own conclusions. For he saw that they did not fit with either language or experience . . ." Cornforth then discusses Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), which first set forth the principles of the new linguistic philosophy.

If the content of this chapter, "A Therapy for Theories", were not really so serious one could find it quite hilarious. Beginning with a box of tools, Wittgenstein sees them not as "instruments of labour" but as analogous to the function of words—serving different kinds of uses. Thus Cornforth launches us into a one hundred and thirty-page examination of linguistic texts. He presents their approach with extraordinary clarity and reveals its many facets. He works from the inside out, letting the philosophy speak for itself, and it speaks challengingly indeed. Here, for the first time since Hume, is a non-materialism that is not idealism, and which, unlike Hume and all his followers (including the positivists and pragmatists) can escape all charges of logically implying solipsism.

I said that Cornforth works from inside this philosophy out, which is another way of saying that he explores it in depth from its own premises. But in the last section of Part II he goes outside and looks at linguistic philosophy from the social-historical standpoint Marxism provides. His chapter titles reveal his approach: "Liberalism and Individualism", and "A place in the Establishment". It is not reactionary, Cornforth seems to argue, not a defence of British, or better today, U.S. Imperialism. It is merely safely liberal and liberally safe. Having no theory to defend "it is able to defend itself so effortlessly and to answer all comers". Having no class position it teaches that morality must reconcile all interests, presupposing that all interests are reconcilable. To this Cornforth sardonically concludes that "the rational principles of the nursery school have their limitations".

On social questions Cornforth criticises linguistic philosophy as "remarkably quietist, non-partisan and non-militant. It expresses the outlook of would-be enlightened commonsense". To be equally for everyone's interests, capitalists and workers, imperialists and colonials, is, Cornforth argues, "a truly classical case of class-conditioned ideology". How conservative liberalism can be!

The exposition, throughout, is both sound and fair. It represents a new level of Marxist criticism of other modes of thought. Cornforth is extraordinarily careful to present the views under consideration before criticising them. He not only does not "call names" but diligently points out detailed contributions to philosophic thought the linguists have made. Francis Bacon in his "Idols of the Marketplace" called attention to the philosophical errors into which the misuse of language can lead us. So did Thomas Hobbes. It would be strange, indeed, if these 17th century thinkers had exhausted the possibilities of critically examining the abuse of words and grammatical constructions. Cornforth can say that this philosophy is seclusive and evasive but he adds that "it is far from trivial and negligible". He says "In its own very specialised sphere of linguistic investigation it has undoubtedly made discoveries, clarifications and criticisms of lasting value to any philosophy which sets out to comprehend human life and purposes". But as much as he believes it has earned a permanent place in the body of progressive thought, it has gained "only a temporary prestige in so far as it earns for itself a place in the temporary establishment by its expression of the limitations, evasions and prejudices, corresponding to the interests and practices of the ruling class" (p. 263). I know of no other work that will give the reader such a clear picture and rational analysis of this most popular contemporary academic philosophy.

Marxism and the "Linguists"

Part III is on Marxism—from its materialism and dialectics to its humanism and ethics. It concludes with a brief chapter on "Coexistence and Controversy", which happily has nothing to do with the old saw that although there can be political and economic coexistence there is no such thing as "ideological coexistence". Marxists are going to live with non-Marxists and anti-Marxists for a long time and much depends on the quality of the dialogue they carry on. One must know the enemy, but the argument of this chapter is that one must know him at his best and most cogent—something Marxists have often failed to do—and recognise that "there are people at work of competence and integrity "who are trying "to solve genuine human problems". It is with such thinkers, Cornforth argues, that Marxists must debate and sharpen their theoretical wits, not the "hired prize-fighters" Marx referred to in the preface to the second edition of *Capital*.

All of Part III is written with an eye to the criticisms both positivists and linguists have made of Marxism. Yet it is in no way defensive or apologetic. Cornforth, rather, is re-examining Marxist philosophy (not revising it)—and its mode of expression rather than its content—in the light of the theoretical developments of the past century's logical methods and language analysis where criticism can be met within the basic Marxist framework and many long-standing difficulties and confusions be avoided. This is especially well done in relation to the "laws" of dialectics. But he carries it through every phase of Marxist philosophy and ethics.

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Cornforth begins by denying that the disagreement between Marxism and the linguistic philosophy is one between rival systems of philosophy. Neither is, for him, a "system" in the traditional sense. For both nothing remains of the old types of philosophy which sought to determine the nature of the world in advance of the discoveries of empirical and experimental science. All that is left, therefore, for both are the inquiries philosophers made in the domain of logic. In a sheer "tour de force" Cornforth then quotes Friedrich Engels and Bertrand Russell. Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring:* "What still independently survives of all former philosophy is the science of thought and its laws—formal logic and dialectics. Everything else is merged in the positive science of nature and history." Russell wrote twenty-five years later: "Every philosophical problem, when it is subjected to the necessary analysis and purification, is either found to be not philosophy at all, or else to be . . . logical" (p. 267).

Cornforth proceeds in this brilliant chapter to show what the real difference between the Marxists and the linguists is, denying any linguist contention that they are merely using the word "philosophy" in different senses. For Marxism the aim of "philosophy is a living activity and not a fossilised doctrine". It is man finding his place in the world and bringing it under his rational and collective control, whereas for the linguists such an approach to the world "can not be done at all". To this Cornforth simply adds: "The specialised philosopher's philosophy has become played out." Some pages later he caustically counters the critics of Marxism by admitting that it is of the nature of scientifically based ideas to be always under review and revision, and that Marxism teaches us "how to live without certainty" and at the same time how to live "without being paralysed by hesitation". He even goes so far as to say that we should speak of "Marxism" and not "Marxist philosophy" because there is no separable theory of Marxist philosophy. He concludes the chapter with an answer to Karl Popper, who is probably our busiest and noisiest critic of Marxism. Popper refutes Marxism by proving that Marxism has so far proved irrefutable. For Popper Marxism is a closed system. But to what is it closed? Cornforth asserts—perhaps for the first time anywhere—that "Dialectical Materialist philosophy is in its whole procedure essentially circular" (p. 282). He then shows why this is true of all thought structures and is perfectly acceptable. He thus destroys with one blow the anti-Marxist arguments of all the Poppers with their "open" systems, whether philosophical, political, economic, or anything else.

A reviewer could well spend as much time on some of the other chapters of Part III as on the first two. Cornforth has given us two books, not one. He has so much to say on "Socialist Humanism", "Communism and Human Values", "Communism and Morality" that one could wish these chapters could be published separately. But when one looks at Chapter 2 on "The Laws of Thought", one is temporarily numbed by its length and weight. This happens to be the most exciting and original chapter in the whole book and would require a separate essay to examine adequately as well as another book on Cornforth's part to develop its ideas further.

Laws of Dialectics

One may find lacunae in Cornforth's movement in this chapter from formal logic to categories. Starting with Ryle's distinction, however, he emphasises that "categories" concern "meaning" and involve a departure from purely formal inquiry. The moment we touch upon the concept of "categories" we enter the realm of generalisation and abstraction, with endless distinction of degrees and levels. Formal logical abstractions are concerned only with "calculating the logical operation involved in abstracting a conclusion from premises", whether in Aristotle or Russell and Whitehead. These are the relationships that can be fed into a computer. But the moment we distinguish colour, for example, from shape or weight, we are dealing in a different category, that of *relational* propositions.

Cornforth proceeds from this to the position that dialectics, as distinct from formal logic, deals with categories and studies and distinguishes modes of abstraction and their assembly. But are there rules for doing this? Hegel pioneered, but obfuscated and mystified the issue. "But", Cornforth continues, "the investigation of universal laws of dialectics remains an open field. It is something that has been projected but not yet systematically done" (p. 293). He is not sure that Marx would have succeeded had he written his much reported treatise on the subject of logic and dialectics, and he adds that Engels' remarks about formal logic in *Dialectics of Nature* date badly today. He then proceeds to argue that the very use of the word "law" in "laws of dialectics" exemplified a quite different use of the word "law" from, say, the laws of motion of Newton and Einstein. But he concludes, after two illustrations of the absurdities that occur when categories are mixed from Lewis Carrol (seeing Nobody and the grin of the Cheshire cat): "The point of these general principles, and what makes their formulation worthy of being called 'the science of thought and its laws', and their observance as essential for right thinking as is observance of the laws of formal logic, is that they are the principles for maintaining informativeness and removing illusion and fantasy" (p. 296).

This leads to the last section of a hazardously creative chapter, which opens with the statement:

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"An important consequence of this account of dialectics is that it renders invalid the separation so often made in expounding Marxist philosophy between materialism and dialectics" (p. 298). He criticises Stalin's separation of materialism from dialectics as one of theory and method and argues for their unity as principles of exactly the same sort. "To think in a consistently materialist way is to think in a dialectical way. . . . Materialism is not 'a theory' that requires experimental verification . . .; nor are the laws of dialectics laws that require experimental verification or could conceivably be falsified; for any verifiable theory is materialist and dialectical" (p. 298).

There is much here that is not yet clear and many convinced Marxists familiar with the "classics" may find plenty to cavil with. But this is a beginning, not an end, and Cornforth is painfully aware of the impasse some of the old formulations and even misunderstandings have got Marxists into. Throughout this analysis he adheres to Lenin's observation that the essence of dialectics is "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions". Taking the best techniques of the mathematical logicians and the linguists he overcomes many of the difficulties and confusions that surround contemporary dialectical materialism and raises it to the level of the best in analysis and interpretation of the world we live in, physical, historical, social, that the developments of the past century allow. Dialectics disappears as a special esoteric method that only Marxists know. Materialism disappears as the old mechanical or metaphysical world-outlook of the eighteenth century. In their place is the outline or suggestion of a unified world outlook firmly rooted in the procedures and ever-developing content of all the sciences and at the same time geared to the hopes and aspirations of the masses of the world's people.

Read It Twice

One might wish to argue about these "two books in one" and want to separate the whole exposition and critique of linguistic philosophy from the presentation of Marxism, but Cornforth preserves the unity throughout, not only thematically but by references to and quotations from the same philosophers—Russell, Ryle, Popper, *et al.* In other words, although this is a well unified work it may at first reading appear confused or repetitious because the same themes often reappear in different contexts and relationships.

Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy is philosophical Marxism criticising and creating on a high level. It is a question whether the English speaking world has seen its equal in the past generation. There have been good expositions but nothing like this in the criticism of the best the bourgeois opposition has to offer. A less astute scholar might not have engaged his enemies so directly or have been guilty of distorting their position by bombast or vituperation. Or he might have surrendered his own ground by conciliations that weakened the Marxist position. Cornforth has done none of these things and it is to be hoped that he will next give us his matured and reasoned exposition of the essentials of Marxist philosophical thought freed from all foreign admixtures and historically derived inadvertences and accretions.

Only one caution is required for the reader to grasp the full impact of this work. He must, as Schopenhauer said of his *World as Will and Idea*, and much more justifiably so, *read the book twice*, for "the beginning presupposes the end almost as much as the end presupposes the beginning".

MARX MEMORIAL LECTURE
1966

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Discussion contributions on:

Changes in the Wages Structure

Leo McGree

WE must feel indebted to Bert Ramelson and Dennis Goodwin for their contributions to the need for more clarity on the recent changes of wage structure which have altered the hours of labour and in some cases have replaced PBR based wages by a weekly or hourly based rate for the shipyard or factory or industry. So if we change from a PBR system of calculation to a weekly wage, there is a fear that as production increases, due to automation or near automation, then the worker tied to weekly or hourly wages will not share this increase, and so the greater will be his rate of exploitation.

While it is true that we are only at the start of the Second Industrial Revolution, we have a great amount of experience to draw from other countries, particularly the U.S.A. We have also the material supplied by the TUC in 1956 entitled *Trade Unions and Automation*, and again at the last TUC 1965 there was presented a fairly detailed report *Automation and Technological Change*.

It is as well that changes in production due to automation and technological change should now be brought out of the discussion stage and on to the factory and shipyard floor, for discussion amongst the stewards and workers, and carried into the T.U. branches and District Committees, as the danger of further and more intense exploitation of the working class is upon us all.

Degree of Exploitation

First of all, our problems are not going to be solved by arriving at a decision as to whether "PBR or a basic weekly or hourly wage" is the method of preventing a greatly intensified rate of exploitation resulting from new methods of production. In the motor industry we have *both* methods of payment—

(1) the hourly rate (which is far above the national basic rate) and the speed of output determined by the speed of the conveyor belt;

(2) the PBR rate which is determined by the output of the worker, with the conveyor belt driving the worker.

How do we determine the degree of exploitation in these two methods of wage payments? If we take the profits made by the firm over the year (before tax) and divide by the number of workers employed, the result of one motor factory can be £14 per week per worker. Take another factory, for example, one of the large chemical combines, and we find the degree of exploitation works out at £17 per week per worker.

What about the "sweat content" of the exploitation?

The "sweat content" of some motor factories is so great that the turn over of labour is colossal, and would bear no comparison with the conditions inside the chemical plant (bad as they may be).

Now how good are the conditions in the ICI for example? The drive for increased output, the greed for more and more profits, are best explained by the Chairman of the ICI, Stanley Paul Chambers, when he met a press conference and reported on the increase of profits of the company. He declared:

> "Our high profits can be attributed very substantially to expanded turnover, with fewer people, getting more out of our people, and getting more turnover out of the same amount of capital."

The report showed there was over 5 per cent fall in the number of ICI employees in Britain that year, but profits increased from £61,800,000 to £70,400,000 before tax.

Building and Civil Engineering

But please take a look at the building and civil engineering industry, which employs over one and a half million workers.

After prolonged negotiations by the Executive of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives, they signed a three-year package deal with the employers, which provided for the introduction of the 40-hour week and an increase in the hourly rate. The results of this package deal means that if the building worker works the 40 hours, his take home pay would not permit him to live and support even a small family, unless he work PBR or extensive overtime.

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What logic is there in boasting that we have now, at long last, secured the 40-hour week, if in order to live we have to work 50 to 60 hours? Large civil engineering employers when advertising for men, dangle as bait the following:

"We work three Sundays out of four."

Some years ago the engineering and shipbuilding industry reduced the working week from 48 to 44 and then proceeded to work 56, and called it progress.

There are some thousands of building workers employed by local authorities (under the Local Authorities Agreement), others employed on hospital maintenance (under the Health Authorities Agreement) who have to beg for overtime, or a bonus scheme to be introduced, or get out altogether in order to obtain a wage on which they can manage to keep out of debt.

The result of the low basic rate of the building industry has meant more demands on the job for bonus, or fall back spot payment, to replace the long hours of overtime. Disputes over bonus targets, stoppages of work have taken place, and branches have demanded action by the Executives to obtain an increase of 1s. 6d. per hour.

The employers who sat in London, representing some 15,000 building firms, declared that the industry could not afford the 1s. 6d. per hour increase demanded by the Unions, as it would ruin the industry and create large scale unemployment. There was not a single employer present who had his employees paid on the basic rate. Sooner than agree to meet the justifiable demands of the unions, the employers pay spot bonus; grant overtime; or introduce "Labour Only" contractors who will ride rough shod over the working rules and working conditions.

It is therefore quite true that in building, engineering and shipbuilding industries the national basic rate of wages weekly or hourly has become "well below the value of labour, impossible to live on, and is becoming more and more merely a figure for calculating earnings based on PBR and/or overtime."

Strong Union Organisation

We must therefore meet the changes of labour relations, new wages structure, etc., due to automation and technological changes, by strong trade union organisation at the factories and shipyards, and demand the right for a guaranteed living wage, without the need for speed-up or long hours of overtime.

To suggest that we should oppose a change from PBR to a higher weekly wage, for a particular industry, factory or shipyard, just because the employers are the prime movers in this direction, would in my opinion be quite wrong. We must not forget that to obtain a higher weekly wage not related to output, nor dependent on overtime, there must be strong union power in the factory or shipyard, and having obtained a change of wage structure they would be strong enough to maintain such gains, and thus lead the way for a national drive for higher wages.

What is wrong with an increased basic wage being negotiated in a factory or shipyard, which covers all the employees, brings unity amongst the crafts and unions, and puts an end to the disunity of each union meeting the management separately and endeavouring to secure some concession on pay that others have not secured?

In the motor industry we have some factories where the TU organisation of the shop stewards is powerful if supported by the union executives. The present weakness is that we have too many unions, and too little unity. Twenty-one unions are represented at negotiations with Ford's, and there is always this competition and scramble for membership.

Trade union structure and unity has now been an important item on the agenda of the past four Congresses, but little success can be reported.

Equal Pay

I do not think we can possibly discuss changes in wage structure in this country without stressing the need for equal pay, which must be seen as the hardest and longest struggle of the Trade Union movement against successive governments over many years.

The first resolution on equal pay was passed at the Bradford TUC in 1888, and it was still on the agenda at the TUC, 1965.

In April 1965 the average earnings of male labour was £18.18.0 per week but for women it was £9.4.0. The attitude of the employers in this country to women is mediaeval—"They want and get one week's labour for half a week's pay."

In 1963, Congress passed a resolution calling on the next Labour Government to satisfy the I.L.O. Convention 100, on equal pay for work of equal value. 48 countries have satisfied the I.L.O. Convention 100, 20 other countries who have not satisfied it have introduced some forms of legislative provision for equal pay. There are near 9 million women in employment in this country, and between 1953 and 1963 there was a 14 per cent rise in employment of women compared to a 7 per cent rise in the employment of men.

Part of the Labour election pledge contained in the Election Manifesto pledged: "to implement the right to equal pay for equal work as part of the Charter of Rights for all employees." This claim is now more urgent than ever.

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Lesson of the U.S.A.

May I in conclusion draw the lesson from America, where automation has made great inroads into industry where the profit motive reigns supreme.

The U.S.A. has accumulated the greatest glut of food in the history of human society. Their granaries, cold stores and warehouses are full to capacity, with every available square inch of storage packed with food to the tune of 8,000 million dollars. American farmers are subsidised to leave 40 million acres of the most prolific soil on earth fallow.

This at a time of some 5 million unemployed and another 2 million on short time, while a survey under President Kennedy revealed: 38 million Americans living in poverty; 12½ million below the poverty level; another 39 million, more than one-fifth of the population, living at "deprivation level".

No wonder the AFL/CIO leaders stated that "automation could have been a blessing, but it turned out to be a curse".

We in this country have been duly warned.

Dave Bowman

IN the October article on "Changes in Wages Structure" Bert Ramelson asks the question "Is there a need for a change in the attitude of the militant worker to the method of payment for work?" The present answer is definitely no.

Arguments are advanced to suggest a change, by quoting such places as the automated Bevercotes pit in the Nottingham coalfield and Esso-Fawley where methods of wage payment have been changed from "productivity payments" to high flat wages. While there is a need to assess these new agreements and also the other agreements where automated processes are now merging, it must be recognised that at present this applies to only a very small section of British industry.

Generally speaking it is not true that British employers are trying to get away from the method of paying wages allied to productivity, and on to the basis of high flat rate payment. As I write the Prices and Incomes Board has just published its recommendations on the claim on behalf of 400,000 railwaymen. The main recommendation is that any increase for railway workers must be accompanied by increased production; by new work methods, some based on technical change, some based on increased work, i.e. one man doing the work formerly done by two or three men. The British Railways Board has naturally welcomed the Report.

Fairfields shipyard on the Clyde is being heralded as the pilot scheme for the future of British shipbuilding. Mr. Stewart, the new boss, demands that wages must be geared to productivity, and performance in the Yard will be judged on "output per man hour". (Interchangeability of jobs will also apply.)

Despite the Bevercotes example the vast mass of miners are still paid part of their wages on the basis of tons of coal mined. In motor car manufacture, in heavy and light engineering, take-home wages are still governed by productivity.

Priorities

The main point I wish to drive home is that we should not get our priorities out of order, as we can easily do in a discussion of this kind. The fact is that the vast mass of productive workers, now, and as I see it, for years yet, will have part of their wages geared to productivity.

Up to present while discussing forms of wage payment no mention has been made of social service workers whose present wage position is *critical*. We all know that a nurse cannot be paid on productivity, or a teacher, or dare I mention it, a policeman. We certainly cannot ignore these millions of workers in the wages argument. Their wages are negotiated on cost of living, comparability principles, new skills and other arguments. It is certain unless higher wages are paid in the social services, efficiency and service will decrease.

Now, having said that, I wish to say something about the assertion of Bert Ramelson on automated processes. "The less production is dependent on the worker's effort and the more on the quality and speed of the machine, the more determined the employer will become to scrap P.B.R. and replace it by flat rates." There is evidence that that is true. But do we ignore that there are two sides to wage negotiations? Always remember the trade unions play, or can play, a decisive part.

"Living Politics"

The rate of exploitation of the worker, the amount of surplus value taken by the employer, is not governed by whether the worker is paid by P.B.R. or a high flat rate. As Bert Ramelson says, the employer will always demand the highest possible profit, but I can foresee a position where a militant trade union, in wage negotiations, can enforce a high flat rate in an automated industry which give less surplus value to the employer than P.B.R. It is

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mainly the economic power, organisation and militancy of the trade unions that determine how much surplus value the employer extracts and not so much the *form* of payment.

While it is necessary carefully to examine the developments of wage payments in automated plants and industries as agreements are negotiated, looking from the present standpoint, I see no reason for the militant trade unionist to change his attitude to methods of payment. First, a nationally negotiated high flat rate scale is an absolute necessity to any fair wage principle in any industry. It is the guarantee to all workers in an industry irrespective of district or factory that a fair wage will be negotiated. This is also vital to the millions of workers in the social services and other industries whose wages cannot be judged by productivity and therefore argue comparability and other principles.

This does not rule out, nor would it be possible to do so, productivity payments on a national, local or plant scale. It is a good socialist tenet, more production—more remuneration. But this must take into consideration the national wage position.

The wage packet is "living politics" no matter in which form it is assessed. There is a constant struggle between the boss seeking the highest profit and the worker seeking the highest wage. It is the development of that struggle that will determine not only the extent of the pay packet but also the form in which it will be assessed.

The Freedom of Art

Betty Reid

BOTH Honor Arundel and Hugh McDiarmid have rightly attacked the tyranny of the demand for a standard of "immediate comprehensibility to all", and the deep rooted philistinism which is common to all classes and all shades of political opinion. We cannot, however, hope to deal with this problem by lecturing people on what they should or should not like, nor by exhorting them to exercise their minds and not be fobbed off by pre-digested pap. This is never a very profitable starting point, whether in politics or cultural matters. Indeed it is this arrogance which has in the past done much to increase the philistine response. It is also true that today there are indications of a modification which may even, arising from a new familiarity with criticism and discussion through television, have too reverend an attitude towards the pundits of non-communication, and an acceptance of the giant confidence trick of the Emperor's new clothes.

Must the Popular be Bad?

There is, however, another and connected problem which should also concern us. This is the attitude which starts from the premise that since the ruling class is firmly in control of the mass media, and the profit motive and maintenance of the status quo is their first consideration, then anything which becomes widely popular must of necessity be bad, since it can only become so by the promotion and design of the ruling class, and must therefore necessarily be concerned with diverting the masses from dangerous ideas, providing soothing candy-floss entertainment, and weakening working-class identity and consciousness. Thus the masses are at the mercy of the manipulation of the mass media, and the only hope is to turn away from these corrupting forms of mass culture to one consciously working-class.

This wholly mechanical attitude, which owes more to George Orwell than to Marx, is most happily absent from Honor Arundel's useful book, though not from Hugh McDiarmid's contribution. It is only necessary, for example, to take the passage in the book on the Edinburgh Festival, and to compare this with McDiarmid's two somewhat contradictory references, to see the difference in tone of the two writers. Similarly when Katharine Thomson cries to be saved from commercialism, and Stephen Sedley derides as "folkum" "There but for Fortune" sung by Joan Baez, they are likely to get an immediate response at first sight from progressive people concerned with musical standards. In essence, however, both are indications of a committed and coherent cultural position which is essentially sectarian, combining an idealisation of an abstract "working-class" with a singular contempt for the mass of ordinary people in the flesh, and for what moves and delights them.

For, miraculously, people are not brain-washed morons waiting to be saved by the enlightened. And as Marxists we should know that in fact it is no miracle but the conditions of class society which produce for the millions those conditions of life which help to inoculate them in varying degrees against the worst efforts of the ruling class, and those who serve it. And it is some degree of humility rather than arrogance which is an important ingredient, before we launch so confidently into labels on what is and what is not "working-class".

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Sectarians and Folk Songs

While no doubt this sectarian attitude finds its expression in all cultural fields it is in folk-song where it is most strongly established. We are not concerned here with the great industry of show-business and "pop" which is a subject in itself. This is a diversion from an understanding of the main issue which is that there are progressives who express extreme hostility to such artists as Joan Baez and Julie Felix, as lacking any background, singing songs which are no more than woolly generalisations, containing abstractions such as peace, humanity, freedom, democracy, all of which cannot be realised in a class society, and can only create illusions, a cosy, comfortable feeling of being progressive, and thus must be attacked. Such words may be appropriate to what a letter in the *Daily Worker* called, in another context, "middle-class do-gooders", but for those concerned with the development of the working-class movement they can only be considered as negative. (If space permitted it would be interesting here to develop this whole question of woolly generalisations. In the thirties we were accused of this when we fought for democratic rights and had to meet the leftist attack that there was no difference between bourgeois democracy and fascism. Today there are those who use the same argument about Goldwater and Johnson—"Goldwater said it, Johnson done it" to quote a current political crack.)

"The most reactionary song I have ever heard in my life" said an indignant young Communist on the "Universal Soldier". What he meant, of course, was that while it sang of peace and universal brotherhood and individual responsibility it lacked any awareness of the elementary fact that those who fight for the protection of socialism differ from those who are soldiers of imperialism. Reactionary? Is this not simply the leftist attitude which makes socialist awareness the condition of entry into the peace movement, thus limiting it in advance to the wholly committed?

When Pete Seeger sings "Little Boxes" before a television audience at the London Palladium, and gets ripples of reaction at key lines in the song, we are told this is a bad song, that it does not make a clear statement, that Malvina Reynolds was writing down to her audience (contradictory?), and that this venture of Seeger's is a capitulation to commercialism.

For closely linked with the cultural assessment there are moral judgments. Singers are bitterly condemned for deliberate "chart-climbing", and for pandering to commercialism. That some may do this is not in dispute. Nor can we deny the enormous and dangerously corrupting pressures. But this is true in all fields. There must be thousands of Communists who have consciously accepted a way of life which is less affluent than they otherwise could have achieved. If in political life this sacrifice were their dominating and self-righteous theme, coupled with extreme hostility to those whom they considered have not maintained these standards, then we would hardly consider this to be helpful to the development of unity. Should we expect less control and objectivity from our artists? Thus we are not interested in band-wagons, commercialism, or lack of background. We are interested in the songs they are singing, and what role they are playing in conveying ideas to large masses of people. And in a world where we need to be uncompromisingly hostile to so much, we will welcome those who are opponents of racialism, who hold an audience with anti-war songs (even if they do not fully understand the role of American imperialism!) and who help to develop respect for the nature of man, and for the relationship between men and women.

This does not mean that we attack or are hostile to those who regard it as their first responsibility to discover and protect the heritage of working-class songs. But the days are gone, if indeed they ever existed, when we could sing lustily "the emancipation of the working-class is the job of the workers alone". The job is too big. Allies in the struggle have to be won. Only if we are not concerned with winning can we afford to ignore this central question of a broad popular alliance led by the working-class. We have to break down barriers everywhere. We have to stop crying about commercialism. This is life and it is what we have to contend with. Bad songs and bad art will find their way into oblivion. In the meantime we have in all fields to discriminate, to single out and foster and welcome what is positive and helps us, and to save our hostility for the enemy.

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The Laws of Dialectics

Alan Spence

IN his article "Some Questions About Laws of Dialectics" Cde. Cornforth leaves the questions he poses unanswered, and in the process contributes a host of phrases—dialectical and undialectical—which swirl with the density of a London smog, being just as impenetrable as that vacuity, when a beacon lit glide-path was conjured from his opening paragraph.

His article is riddled with incorrect statements, definitions and formulations, with his main errors consisting of the following six items:

(a) A failure to apply a methodological approach.
(b) Obtuseness in dealing with the concept of Law.
(c) False understanding of Logic.
(d) The elevation of Mathematics to a science standing above others.
(e) A wrong perspective of Empiricism, and
(f) The failure to grasp the particularity of Dialectics

Every artist has the prerogative to commence his exposition at any point within the canvas that he may choose. To go outside that canvas however, is to falsify the perspective, rupture the relationship between form and content, and thus abort the aim of the work.

Such a rupture is characteristic of the essay of Comrade Cornforth. His exposition lacks organic totality and is bedevilled by the "detached" concepts he offers for elucidation.

Instead of laying the whole before the reader and then dissecting its parts, he presents us with the parts severed from the whole, with no indication of their relationship to that from which they are separated.

This "style" is most unsatisfying, particularly for people new to Marxism; this could easily have been remedied by a very brief introductory statement on dialectical materialism. Such an introduction would have shown that the philosophy is divided into dialectical, for the method of study; and into materialism, as its interpretation of nature, society and thought, touching, in the process, upon the inseparable unity that exists between the two. This would then have grounded his observations upon their proper base.

Man-made and Objective Laws

Arising from this methodological failure springs the obscure and imprecise discussion in "Man-made Laws and Objective Laws". In this section his contention is portrayed in such a loose fashion that it rises to nothing more than an eclectic assembly of phrases.

The distinct impression is conveyed that "legislative laws" can be taken-or-left just at one's fancy. This is not so, for as Dietzgen said "The World is Homogeneous in Essence". From Lenin's definition that "law is a reflection of what is essential in the movement of the Universe", it follows that law must have the quality of "essential" in society for as Marx said "Man opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces".

Comrade Cornforth gives little indication that laws, whether dealing with society or nature, have the quality of necessity. That they are there because they need to be, and that this applies whether they are laws controlling the relationship of slave to master or whether one is stating Ohm's law. Laws are concrete, real and have to be obeyed. They can no more be evaded by slave or electrician than man can fly by flapping his hands. If they are disobeyed then difficulties arise; perhaps crucifixion for the revolting slave! For a law can not be violated but only an *attempt* to violate made.

This, of course, is only a statement of the basic emergence of "Law". Its further elucidation necessitates the introduction of the concept of struggle of which "Law" is but the expression of relationship. For example the Romans made laws which bound a slave inexorably to his master; but with the struggle that was thus produced, the overwhelming dominance became eroded and a gradual weakening of this relationship produced the relative freeness of the colonate, which produced new laws. In this context Ohm's law is a reflection of the struggle between pressure and resistance. Thus do Laws owe their existence to a necessary relationship of struggle; with law becoming changed through this same process of struggle until that which was dominant becomes secondary and new laws enact the new necessity.

On page 334, line 10 of the article quoted, Cornforth makes the assertion that the "techniques of proof in logic and mathematics are . . . very highly specialised, and are still the subject of dispute amongst those specially concerned with them". This illustrates an approach which amounts to a false understanding of Logic for it adopts views different to those expressed by Lenin who said in Vol. 38, Coll. Works page 319, that "Logic, dialectics and the theory of knowledge are the same thing".

This being so what Comrade Cornforth is saying is that the dialectical method of Marxism is still the subject of dispute "amongst those specially con-

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cerned with them", and this must surely mean: members of the Communist Party! I'm sure that Comrade Cornforth did not mean it in this manner, but that is what it boils down to. Formulating the question in the way he does shows that he has not understood that logic has no separate existence, but has been historically subsumed within the method of dialectical materialism.

Mathematics

He makes a further error in giving to mathematics an elevation superior to that of other sciences. He does not comprehend that mathematics are of secondary importance, dealing, as they do, with the quantities of other qualities, or, that number unaccompanied by knowledge of a quality conveys nothing: that number of itself says nothing until we know what has been numbered.

For example, a lorry driver can say that in his four-ton load he has two tons more than he can carry, and so he wants it reducing by half. Speaking thus he acts as a mathematician. When he further goes on to say that the two tons of lead had better be removed as they are less bulky than the cars he is carrying, he is speaking about things—qualities—the object of his mathematical calculations. This is the purpose of mathematics; and its only purpose; to reflect objectivity. This reflection is facilitated by the use of symbols but to give to these symbols the creativity of a "Natural Force" is nothing short of idealism. For as Lenin said in *Empirio-Criticism*, page 318, "The great successes achieved by science, the approach to elements of matter so homogeneous and so simple that their laws of motion can be treated mathematically, encouraged the mathematician to overlook matter. Matter disappears, only equations remain."

Comrade Cornforth ought to have had Lenin's statement in mind before approaching the compilation of the section on mathematics, for then he would have had cause to consider the implications of many of his phrases. He writes of "necessary truth" as the characteristic of logic and mathematics (page 332, 2nd. para. 2nd col.) which distinguish it from the "factual truth" of legislative laws. In doing this he states a dichotomy that does not exist. Facts exist as the quantities and qualities of processes, and necessary laws are their movement of becoming, developing and decaying. In this process the user of mathematics, be he humble or high, be his mathematics simple or complex, will be doing the self-same job: counting numbers.

Empiricism

In the part dealing with "The Test of Objective Laws" he positions the value of empiricism wrongly. For empiricism has no value today except as one of the steps in the ladder to the dialectical method. Empiricism is the knowing how to *perform certain acts* through experience, without knowing the laws that determine results. The doing by rote because countless generations had done it that way; the knowing of "how" but ignorance of "why".

He treats empiricism as a science running parallel to dialectics, gives to it as much importance and considers it as the "Law" for every-day use. In doing this, attributes and properties are attached to it which make it into a method that has validity for every epoch. In doing this, Comrade Cornforth has failed to realise that empiricism is historically finished and whilst it contributed to dialectics it is contained within that method as a historical acquisition; much as the benefits of feudalism are carried up into capitalism and just as the benefits of capitalism are carried on into socialism. His views, in attempting to give empiricism a new lease of life, are confusing, retrograde, and, as such, doomed to failure.

Starting off with the wrong premises in "The Laws of Dialectics", it becomes more muddled the longer it continues. The same mistakes as earlier are repeated, adding to this the erroneous statement that the "Laws of Dialectics" are not subjected to proof.

Because Cornforth does not understand dialectics it becomes impossible for him to illustrate—except by rote—their use, and because he does not use them creatively he denies "proof" of their existence. He could have shown that by teaching people the alphabet, it could not be forecast what the 26 letters from A to Z would do in all circumstances. What we do know is that in the hands of a Marxist they would be used to reflect reality. The same with the method of dialectics; the a, b and c of the Party. In the hands of party members they will be used to reflect political, artistic, natural and philosophical aspects.

It is true that the bare statement of the principles of dialectics does not provide us with concrete information, but neither does the provision of the alphabet provide us with poems. What it does do is to provide us with the method to reflect reality, either through paintings or other artistic mediums, or through nature as expressed in the organic and inorganic sciences or through society as expressed in such works as *Capital*.

The Use of Dialectics

His greatest mistake comes however when he refutes the use of dialectics to "absolutely anything and everything" for this disarms the Party theoretically and dooms it to relying on instinct and accumulated experience, which, while adequate for many of the day-to-day struggles, is disastrous when faced with new problems for it commits it to arriving at policy on the basis of trial-and-error and that

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method, when you are dealing with people, can be impressively painful.

When Comrade Cornforth asserts that no record will be found (which) aimed at the discovery of the laws of dialectics, he insults the efforts of every philosopher who grappled with the "knowing process" and in particular Hegel and the early Marxists. He may be correct in saying that they did not have as their Design Project "The discovery of dialectical laws", for those terms arose in the course of the historical accumulation of knowledge, but that does not alter the fact that they set out to discover them. If they did not succeed at an early date they are in good company, for Michelangelo, great as he was, found himself unable to discover the means to produce a V.C. 10.

It is wrong to state as he does in "The Science of Interconnections" that "The study of dialectics is thus concerned, not with concrete events, which is the business of empirical science, but rather with the more general categories . . ." On page 339 of Vol. 38, Lenin said "The splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts is the essence of dialectics." Wholes exist in the concrete and dialectics has the function of cognising it. And this includes the particular as well, for every whole is only a particular of something else. For example; capitalist society is a whole, but it is only a particular period, stage, moment of the process of class struggle. Water may boil, and in doing this it is a whole unto itself, but in relation to a tea-party it exists only as a particular; just as the buns which were part of the tea-party existed as wholes and went through all the process of transformation of quantity into quality, unity and conflict of opposites, and negation of the negation.

In his contribution Cde. Cornforth has assembled together various phrases of Engels, Lenin, etc., and attempted to use them to understand processes. No one, I venture to say, can get from his contribution a method of understanding nature and its processes. Still less could one gain from his article a knowledge of the method of dialectical materialism which could be used on the shop floor, and this cannot be anything but unsatisfying, for dialectics is the most potent weapon in a revolutionary's ideological armoury, without which he fumbles for solutions and with which he measures the steps taken and the steps that he has yet to take to win improvements and power, both in the particular as well as in the general.

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